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in
Education:

A MIDCENTURY APPRAISAL

Theodore
Brameld

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



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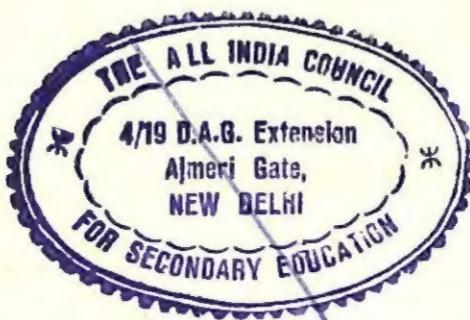
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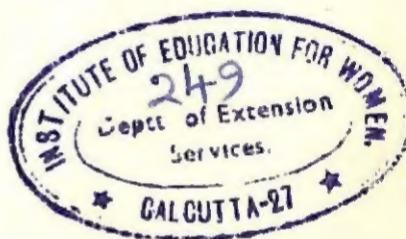
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Brameld

ENDS AND MEANS IN
EDUCATION: A MID-
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C-A

To
my
daughters

KATHERINE
and
PATRICIA

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Foundations
of Education:
Toward
Reconstruction*

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Preface

At the mid-point of our violent century, American and world education would do well to take stock—to review its failures and successes, but above all to assess its inventory of resources for the perilous half-century which lies ahead. This book aims in modest ways to accomplish both tasks. Its heaviest emphasis is, however, on what lies ahead—or at least what *could* lie ahead were education, hand-in-hand with other humane forces of our culture, to mobilize the great if still too largely untapped human power for good which stands ready to be used.

The central theme is that education can and should dedicate itself centrally to the task of reconstructing a culture which, left unreconstructed, will almost certainly collapse of its own frustrations and conflicts. This is not a new theme; yet it is one which by no means, especially in the past half decade, has received the attention or won the concern of enough teachers,

parents, or children. Nor is it a theme which can be treated fully or deeply within any single volume. The author is aware that numerous questions are left dangling or only sketchily answered. Indeed, it is his hope that these will provoke the kind of friendly but incisive controversy which is always democracy at one of its favorite and necessary tasks. With all its omissions and limitations, however, the case for a reconstructed culture-and-education is presented here without apology: our time is too precarious to expect perfection. Every citizen—and every educator—is obligated to contribute what he can to understanding and purposeful action.

While the chapters which follow are grouped more or less logically both in theme and sequence, they do not have the organic unity of a book developed step by step. Nearly all of the twenty-four chapters have already appeared, with some alterations, in various publications over a period of several years. The author is grateful to the following for permission to republish them in the present form: *School and Society* (Chapters II and VII); *Educational Forum* (Chapters III, XI, and XIV); *Current History* (Chapter IV); *Journal of Educational Sociology* (Chapter V); *Educational Trends* (Chapter VI); *Progressive Education* (Chapters VIII and XXI); *Frontiers of Democracy* (Chapter XIII, considerably expanded from original article); *Educational Supervision and Administration* (Chapter XV); *University of Michigan Official Publication* (Chapter XVI); *Harvard Educational Review* (Chapters XVII and XXIII); *NEA Journal* (Chapter XVIII); *New Era* (Chapter XIX); *Pi Lambda Theta Journal* (Chapter XX); and to Harper and Brothers for permission to reprint, with minor changes, Chapter XXIV which originally appeared in the Sixth Yearbook of the John Dewey Society, *Mobilizing Educational Resources*. The author also appreciates permission granted by the Federal Council of the New Education Fellowship (Australia) to publish in America three of the addresses delivered as the American delegate to the international NEF conference in Australia: Chapters II, XV, and XX.

Chapters VI and XXIII were originally presented before the

National Society of College Teachers of Education, Atlantic City. Chapter VII was a presidential address before the Philosophy of Education Society, Philadelphia. Chapter XVI was presented before the Michigan Schoolmasters' Club, Ann Arbor; and Chapter XVII, extemporaneously, before the National Conference of Christians and Jews, New York.

Finally, a word of explanation is perhaps helpful with regard to the chapters of Part III: New Frontiers in Education—Some Examples. Three examples are chosen to point up certain phases of reconstructed practice upon the basis of theoretical principles developed in Part I and, to some extent, in Parts II and IV.

The author has been interested in the first of these frontiers, workers' education, for some years. He has taught for parts of three summers at the School for Workers, University of Wisconsin; has served as Chairman of the Adult Education Committee, American Federation of Teachers (AFL); and was the editor and co-author of the Fifth Yearbook of the John Dewey Society, *Workers' Education in the United States*.

The second illustration of frontier practices, intercultural education, has provided equally fruitful opportunities to implement philosophic principles, especially those derived directly from progressivism. The description of intercultural education in certain school systems (Chapter XVII) was the result of a first-hand investigation made possible by a grant of the Rosenwald Fund, and later published in book form under the title, *Minority Problems in the Public Schools*. The author serves as a staff member of the Center for Human Relations Studies, New York University; a consultant for the Anti-Defamation League and Bureau for Intercultural Education, New York; and was a staff member of the third National Training Laboratory in Group Development, Bethel, Maine.

The last example of application—the experiment in "future-centered" general education described in Chapter XVIII—is, however, the most direct translation thus far of the author's philosophic principles into school practice. It was conducted several times while he was a member of the faculty of the University of Minnesota. The same type of experiment was also

conducted on the high school level at Floodwood, Minnesota, and interpreted in an earlier work, *Design for America*.

The writer is indebted to his friend, Mr. Francis Villemain, for the ability and time so freely given to the typographical design.

The present volume is to be followed shortly by another in which the implications of these practices, as well as of the theory behind them, will be developed more systematically and thoroughly.

New York,
November 1, 1949

THEODORE BRAMELD

PART ONE

**Philosophic
Foundations of
Education:
Toward
Reconstruction**

A NEEDED OUTLOOK

American and world education requires a reconstructed outlook. Our purpose is to state some main features of this outlook, and to indicate reasons why it is both desirable and necessary. Whatever success we may have can be determined only by willingness on the part of readers to follow the discussion through to the end. But at the outset we shall outline our position in as straightforward a manner as possible.

Although labels are not too important, we need some kind of label to distinguish the philosophy of education which is the thesis of this book. Therefore we shall call it, at least for the time being, "reconstructionism." This is not an original term, nor is it especially provocative. It does imply our central contention that America can no longer afford to accept as satisfactory the prevailing structure of its schools, and therefore that some kind of new structure must be erected in its place.

When we say new, however, we do not mean in every respect. A house that is reconstructed on its old site will probably utilize some of the original foundation; if not that, it will not ignore all knowledge of previous architecture, or disregard tested building materials. The platitude that there is nothing new under the sun happens to be false, but it suggests the truer notion that there is nothing so new that it has no rootage whatever in the old. One of the ways in which reconstructionism has such rootage—in fact, the most important way—is in its devotion to democracy. More than any other inherited belief, we hold that democracy is the highest form of society and that the public school should be one of its principal instrumentalities.

But precisely because of our unqualified belief in democracy we shall insist upon a fundamental reconstruction of education. The public school as now constituted is failing democracy. And because it is failing, it not only endangers the survival of the latter; it endangers its own survival. If democracy ends, the public school in any honorable or humane sense will cease to exist in America, as it has already ceased to exist in too many places elsewhere in the world.

Not that education is not attempting, often conscientiously, to serve American democracy. We have no reason to doubt the sincerity or loyalty of administrators and teachers; certainly of the millions of students. The trouble rather is that great numbers of these people are teaching or learning about something which, in large and increasing degree, does not any longer exist. They are, in other words, teaching and learning about a society which belonged to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which belongs decreasingly to the first half of the twentieth, and which will probably belong even less to the last half.

It has become truistic to assert that one of the most crucial features of the order evolving around us is its *collectivity*. Of course no one, not even the school, neglects to observe how communication has squeezed the earth to a fraction of its former size, how transportation has narrowed the great continents and oceans, how technology has unified and systematized industrial enterprise beyond anything hitherto known in history.

What education has not realized is the powerful impact of these accelerating collectivities upon the lives of human beings at every vital point: upon the family, state, art, religion, recreation—upon, above all, occupation. Education not only fails to keep up with the impact of these changes upon the masses of people who come under its jurisdiction. It is too largely oblivious to their significance even for the organization of the schools themselves.

Take, as an example, the undisputed fact that governmental services have become more and more coordinated under federal supervision. While this trend continues in virtually every other field, public education remains almost entirely under localized direction and support. At the same time, the government proceeds to organize a great number of new national services like social security—all with tremendous educational potentialities, all too largely disregarded by professional educators themselves. A demand that federal funds at least be provided to equalize general educational privileges among the states has, to be sure, been made. But even among those educators who advocate federal support, we hear no realistic consideration of the corollary of federal control. On the contrary, they simply and flatly reject such control as traditionally evil, and continue to cling tenaciously to a doctrine of "states' rights" which is becoming in some respect as obsolete in education as it is in economics or politics.

Consider an example of a different kind. Any study of the typical curriculums of American high schools will reveal that, except for alterations of minor consequence, they are perpetuations of a system which is exceedingly old. This is what educators call the college preparatory curriculum. It requires the "mastery" of such subjects as mathematics, foreign language, history, English, all of which are supposedly indispensable prerequisites for college education. In recent years this curriculum has been criticized, of course—mainly on the ground that a large percentage of high school graduates do not attend college. What the criticisms almost completely overlook is that the average college is often as indifferent to the changes taking place in our

culture as are the high schools below, and that the college preparatory curriculum is therefore equally deficient for those who do continue beyond secondary education. Most schools at whatever level proceed too blandly from the assumption that their purpose is to prepare young people for a way of life characterized by the virtues of independence, personal exertion, fair rewards for earnest individual effort; and by faith that a cultural coating purchased through sufficient immersion in classics and other learned fluids will somehow insure them against the disgrace of physical work. Too few of them proceed from the contrary assumption that the individualistic period of our history is waning—waning so rapidly that we can accurately say it has in many ways quite disappeared. Too few of them, even the scattered secondary schools which begin to agitate feebly for reform of the old system, recognize that their primary obligation is to direct utmost attention toward a type of education which will enable young people to live in a culture the essential feature of which is economic, political, and cultural interdependence. Almost none of them sufficiently appreciates, unless perhaps verbally, that the democracy of tomorrow, while the outgrowth of the democracy of yesterday, is bound to be drastically different in form if it continues to exist at all; and that education must reconstruct itself accordingly.

II

Now although the organization and operation of primary, secondary, and higher institutions meander complacently along a road mapped out by a past generation of educators too often oblivious to social geography beyond the horizon of the nineteenth century, we cannot deny that in the lecture-rooms and books of theory there is an enormous amount of complaint. Certainly no period has generated criticism and debate over our schools equal to that of the last twenty years. All influential thinkers in the field agree at least on one point: that education is not doing the job it ought, indeed must, do if it is to contribute its just share to the defense of democracy in the face of an unstable world.

After agreeing thus far, however, our leading theorists only help to prolong the stalemate in education by confusing its practitioners. Wherever the latter begin to listen with interest to the diagnoses and remedies of the former, they find themselves at once bewildered by irreconcilable differences among educational philosophers themselves.

But the reason for these differences lies not merely in conflicting assumptions or alternative techniques. It lies also in the fact that the most influential educational philosophies of America are, in one way or another, unable or unwilling to face the full consequences of the crucial phenomena to which we have already pointed. They have, in some degree, all recognized that such phenomena as collectivity exist. Indeed, it is precisely these which have been responsible, directly or indirectly, for much of their excitement. But it is one thing to recognize the presence of a phenomenon. It is quite another to examine relentlessly its implications, and to draw the full inferences from it for the rebuilding of education which it persistently demands. This not one of the three outstanding contemporary theories has done—whether it be the theory of "progressivism," or "essentialism," or "perennialism."

Meanwhile, the position advocated here, by contrast with other educational philosophies, is that a powerful program of democratic change becomes, on the one hand, a central problem of education; and, on the other hand, one which cannot be achieved unless and until people understand the kind of changes they want to make in terms of the kind of society they want to have. More specifically, a reconstructed democracy as a necessary and desirable goal for the twentieth century should itself be analyzed and magnified in order that those who would benefit most by its achievement may join together in the implementation of economic, political, and social means. In this effort we should of course explore whatever means are already available in so far as these show promise of being harmonious with and helpful to our ends. Thus we should encourage the active participation of young people in every social movement revealing symptoms of concern with characteristics of the new order. At

the same time we need to examine the whole complex process of social change—its obstacles, channels, dangers, possibilities—not only because, until this process is clarified we shall not unify or generate sufficient power among the scattered efforts now under way, but also because the methods we succeed in developing will themselves have important effect upon the content and form of the goals we succeed in achieving.

In thus recognizing the reciprocity of means and ends, we do not however agree with those—particularly of the progressivist stamp—who so often argue that the latter will emerge only as we concern ourselves primarily with evolution of the former. On the contrary, we wish to emphasize that it is either neglect of or failure to provide sufficiently definite and defensible ends which is the Achilles' heel of educational practice and theory today. This neglect or failure is in itself a misfortune when we consider the evidence pointing unmistakably to the emergence of collective patterns—a misfortune because education does so little to prepare boys and girls for the readjustments they will either make in a democratic framework, or have made for them by totalitarian force. But further than this, let us repeat, a method or program can hardly be found, much less succeed, unless it is guided by clarity of goals, common strength of aim. If a more rationally ordered and unified democracy can be shown to be what the majority of citizens should wish to achieve, the chances of their creating the machinery to bring it about will be greater than if they neither know nor care.

III

In this introduction we have not, of course, been able to discuss details, and we are aware that such a presentation results inevitably, not merely in oversimplification, but underqualification as well. But when anyone deals with ideas—especially general and controversial ideas—it is impossible to make clear their meaning all at once. Indeed, because all such ideas are disguised by words to which people attach varieties of meaning, nothing is more difficult. We do not believe elaboration will require that we retract any preliminary statement made thus

far. We do grant that what has been asserted should be more fully explained. Yet we are ready even now to admit that the more fundamental and far-reaching ideas are, the less likelihood there is of explaining them with complete satisfaction.

The ideas which here are central are of this character. However unsatisfactorily we may deal with them, they are at the heart of democracy, of public education, and of the transition through which both are now passing. Those who are sincerely devoted to democracy and education, and who have not made up their minds completely as to what is wrong or should be right about either or both, should now be willing to examine a thesis so easy to state yet so difficult to establish before it is too late. This thesis is that education, if it hopes to share in democracy's salvation, must at once comprehend the collective arrangements emerging around us; seek in every way to direct their rational development; preserve and enhance the values of democracy within these arrangements; and infuse them with such power and promise as to fortify ourselves securely against the counter-claims of anti-democratic ways of life.

two

PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATION IN AN AGE OF CRISIS

I

In the minds of many, philosophy is associated with the abstract, erudite study of concepts entirely removed from the practical issues of everyday life. The philosopher, traditionally, is thought of as a person whose chief interest is in attempting to discover the innermost essence of reality, regardless of whether his discoveries have any useful significance or not.

Another widely recognized conception, however, is that of philosophy as merely the persistent effort of both ordinary and sophisticated people to make life as intelligible and meaningful as possible. Such a conception is now sufficiently recognized so that many citizens in every walk of life are ready to agree that one of the most important, if not the single most important, of obligations confronting any human being is to clarify his basic beliefs—in other words, to analyze and organize the premises upon which he conducts his political, scientific, aesthetic, reli-

gious, and educational practices. It is this latter conception which is today the more vital; we are interested here in greater clarity of belief for an age torn by confusion and conflict. We need not belabor the obvious fact that the very existence of what we have called civilization is in peril. There are many portents of this peril, the most frightening of which is atomic energy. Men are widely agreed that, unless this most diabolical of all achievements of science is effectively controlled, we may expect, conceivably within our own lifetime, the end of all that we have cherished—including ourselves.

It is for such reasons, then, that philosophy has once more come into its own. When people are complacent about their beliefs, when they find it easy to effect satisfying adjustments; philosophy is understandably of the former of the two types mentioned. A fairly harmonious period in civilization is one in which philosophy may be regarded as something of an intellectual luxury, albeit a luxury worthy of our utmost respect. When, however, the beliefs which we have hitherto found more or less adequate are threatened, it becomes necessary to re-examine ourselves and our institutions; to subject even our most sacred beliefs to ruthless examination; and to determine by the highest standards of rational and cooperative inquiry whether or not the beliefs we have hitherto found adequate may conceivably require a thoroughgoing reformulation.

This need holds for every area fundamental to human existence. In religion, men have been analyzing their assumed beliefs with a newly critical penetration. In science, a sweeping revaluation has been under way for more than a quarter of a century, with the result that some of its most universally accepted assumptions have now been found inadequate. In politics and economics one need only remember that, within the lifetime of most of us, world-shaking revolutions have taken place and that the social beliefs hitherto cherished by millions of men are no longer cherished.

The same situation applies also to education. The beliefs which have governed the organization and practice of schooling on every level are being more seriously challenged than at any

time since the Renaissance. It was earlier thought, for example, that education should aim primarily to instill in the minds of the young a reverent acceptance of traditional patterns of culture. Most of us recognize now the inadequacy of this assumption. What we do not always recognize is that this widespread skeptical attitude toward inherited educational beliefs is itself a reflection of our culture. In other words, the philosophy of education today is, first of all, another symptom of the same basic questionings taking place in every other area of human life.

Indeed, our central thesis is that the critical examination and reformulation of beliefs about education is indigenous with the same process that is occurring in religion, art, science, economics, politics. Education cannot be understood except in the context of the culture which education reflects and upon which education in turn exerts its influence. The greatest error that educators can make (and we mean by "educators" not only professional educationists, but all parents, students, and citizens concerned with education) is to assume that education is an isolated or cloistered institution which should be interpreted by itself without regard for the cyclonic forces that are sweeping the earth.

In this dramatic setting let us turn now to the major philosophies of education which are struggling for domination through the world and which are correlated with its shifting cultural configurations. If we may attempt to sketch a picture of contemporary philosophies of education in American terms—though with some translation of terminology they apply equally elsewhere—we should say that there are at least five major alternative choices with which you and I are confronted in deciding the road along which education should follow in this age of crisis.

II

The first of these may be treated briefly. Philosophers use the term *eclecticism* to mean that outlook upon any or all areas of life which combines, in a rather piecemeal and artificial fashion, elements of many outlooks. The eclectic, in other words, is one

who believes that the most honest approach to philosophy is one which refuses to commit itself to any unified or consistent pattern of beliefs, and which, therefore, rather insists that in all major outlooks there are grains of truth, segments of value, that need to be recognized and respected for what they contribute by themselves.

With all respect for the honest eclectic, we confess misgiving as to whether his can be an adequate philosophy for anyone seeking a way of life which has maximum meaning for our time. Eclecticism is rather like a chemical mixture: when you put sulphur and iron particles together and mix them, nothing happens to any individual particle unless the mixture is heated; when heat is applied, however, each of the particles loses its identity and is fused into a compound where neither the iron nor the sulphur retains its original character. In terms of this analogy, eclecticism reminds one of a chemical mixture. One should properly borrow ingredients of many different viewpoints in order to build an adequate philosophy. But if the parts are not then fused, the result will not be the kind of organic compound of beliefs which enables one to interpret each aspect of nature and humanity by its harmonious relations with all other aspects.

The remaining philosophies considered here are, therefore, different from eclecticism, for they aim to build organic unity for man and civilization—to provide synthesis and meaning to one's life. Let us repeat the terms, "essentialism," "progressivism," "perennialism," and "reconstructionism," to delineate these fundamental positions. All these must be understood in their cultural context, not as self-sufficient theories. We shall take each of the four in turn, and summarize its central nature.

III

Essentialism is that philosophy of education which holds that the schools must be based, first of all, upon the "essentials"—that is, upon the tried and tested heritage of skills, facts, laws of knowledge which have come down to us through the rich centuries especially of the modern period of civilization. The essen-

tialist is therefore one who builds education upon the foundations of what we often call the "classical curriculum." The mind of the student is conceived of as a kind of receptacle into which the school pours as much of the organized content of tradition and the objective world as that receptacle is able to contain. The teacher serves as a "conveyor belt" between the store of knowledge possessed by the outside world and the mind of the student. Examinations are devices by which the schools measure the quantity of content held by the mind. Essentialism, we can readily understand, is therefore extremely critical of any theories and practices in education which subordinate what it regards as the fundamental process of learning—a process which is primarily though not exclusively one of absorption.

Particularly is essentialism critical of the second of our major theories: progressivism. For here is a philosophy which holds the primary purpose of education to be not at all one of absorbing the maximum content of the outside world. Rather it is one of stimulating people to think with effectiveness; and to think is to analyze, to criticize, to select between alternatives, and to venture solutions upon the basis of both analysis and selection. To think, in a word, is to practice the scientific method, writ large; it is to carry on intelligent adjustment and readjustment with the natural and social environment of which one's self is a part. Schools, when properly organized, are media through which the child thus learns to live intelligently—that is to say, critically and responsibly. They are centers of democracy, for they should provide continuous opportunities through which problems are met by cooperative participation on the part of the largest possible number of student-citizens. In such an educational environment teachers are also partners in the common enterprise of intelligent social experience; and learning takes place through the vital utilization of that experience.

The third of our four constructive philosophies, perennialism, is closer to essentialism, by far, than to progressivism. It is a movement which holds that the only hope for sound education—and indeed for a sound culture—is through restoration of the spirit which governed education during the Middle Ages.

Hence the perennialist is not so much interested in emphasizing the social heritage as he is in emphasizing eternal, absolute principles of truth, goodness, and beauty which are outside space and time—which are in a profound sense everlasting, and therefore perennial. The medieval system of education was, in essence, dedicated to the search for "first principles" of this nature. The aim was to search out, by means of logical analysis, such invulnerable and deductively certain axioms that anyone possessing the necessary intellectual equipment would recognize them self-evidently for what they are. It is the belief of perennialists today that education has become corrupted by its gradual departure from this medieval kind of certainty. Hence the supreme aim of education should be to train intellectual leaders so brilliantly endowed with the intuitive capacity to recognize first principles that we may, for the first time in centuries, be led out of the darkness which threatens to engulf mankind, and into the light of rationally determined order.

The fourth and final philosophy, reconstructionism, agrees up to a point with the perennialist: there is desperate need for clarity and certainty, for our civilization is beset with frustration and bewilderment. It radically disagrees, however, with perennialism's solution. Instead of returning to the Middle Ages, it would attempt to build the widest possible consensus about the supreme aims which should govern mankind in the reconstruction of world culture. These aims can be delineated through cooperative search: indeed, the reconstructionist is convinced that already there is a growing consensus or agreement about their most basic characteristics. The world of the future should be a world which the common man rules not merely in theory, but in fact. It should be a world in which the technological potentialities already clearly discernible are released for the creation of health, abundance, security for the great masses of every color, every creed, every nationality. It should be a world in which national sovereignty is utterly subordinated to international authority. In short, it should be a world in which the dream of both ancient Christianity and modern democracy are fused with modern technology and art into a society under the

control of the great majority of the people who are rightly the sovereign determiners of their own destiny. Reconstructionism is thus a philosophy of magnetic foresight—a philosophy of ends attainable through the development of powerful means possessed latently by the people. To learn how to exercise that power for these ends is the first priority of education.

IV

Let us return, now, to the cultural context of our four fundamental philosophic alternatives. In political language, we may at once see how they roughly parallel what we, in America at least, would call, respectively, the conservative, liberal, reactionary, and radical positions. The essentialist is the conservative; he would meet the difficulties of our time by training minds skilled in conserving, rather than in changing, the essential content and structure of the pre-existent world. The progressive is the liberal; he would solve our problems by developing minds skilled as instruments in behalf of progressive, gradual, evolutionary change. The perennialist is the reactionary; he would deal with our contemporary issues by reacting against them in favor of solutions extraordinarily analogous with those of a civilization long past—or even by escaping into an intellectual realm of timeless and spaceless perfection. The reconstructionist is the radical; he would face our problems, not by conserving, not merely by modifying, nor by retreating; but by future-looking, by building a new order of civilization under genuinely *public* control, and dedicated to the fulfillment of the human values for which most men have been struggling, consciously or unconsciously, for many centuries.

How shall these alternatives be appraised? May we indicate that, in the first place, the exponents of each position deserve utmost respect and thoughtful attention. May we however in all fairness indicate, in the second place, that reconstructionism is, in our own judgment, the only theory in which mankind can now safely place its educational and, indeed, its social confidence.

The essentialist, notwithstanding his sincerity, would develop

minds that are quiescent rather than active—young citizens who, while trained in the essentials, are conditioned too largely to passive acceptance of the inherited patterns of our culture. Progressivism, while the techniques of reflective thinking that it centralizes are of utmost importance, is inadequate in the respect that it focuses too much upon means at the expense of ends; it expresses the typical experimental spirit of open-minded, tolerant consideration of all sides of all questions, but fails to answer clearly the question of where we are going. In this concern of *how we do think* it has insufficiently helped us to discover for *what we should think*. Thus it is the counterpart of a culture in transition, developing by trial-and-error with minor concern for clear-cut purposes or goals. Perennialism is dubious for a number of reasons, but especially because, in its central belief in the self-evidence of truth and values which are beyond public and scientific verification, it exposes itself to the grave accusation of setting up absolute criteria or fixed standards. These, in the hands of corrupt leaders, could easily be utilized (as they have, historically, often been utilized) to justify arbitrary authority without sanction of the majority who are always in a democracy the final judge of standards.

Reconstructionism, the remaining alternative, is by no means a finished philosophy. Nevertheless, an increasing number of educational thinkers in various countries are converging toward this position. While repudiating nothing of the constructive achievements of progressivism, and while recognizing also the importance both of essential knowledge and clear rational analysis, this philosophy commits itself, first of all, to the renascence of modern culture. It is infused with a profound conviction that we are in the midst of a revolutionary period out of which should emerge nothing less than control of the industrial system, of public services, and of cultural and natural resources by and for the common people who, throughout the ages, have struggled for a life of security, decency, and peace for themselves and their children.

Education sufficiently dedicated to this purpose no longer remains, to be sure, on the fence of intellectual "impartiality."

But it is an education which, for that very reason, is inspired with enthusiasm for research, for diffusion of knowledge, for humanly realized beauty, goodness, and truth—an education which, through the schools of America and of all other democracies, will at last demonstrate its capacity to play no longer a minor but a major role in the reconstruction of civilization.

three

EDUCATION AS THE NEW REACTION

In referring to Chancellor Robert M. Hutchins' philosophy of education as the New Reaction, we do so with the intention of distinguishing it from the old reaction. By the old reaction we mean the forces in America which attempt to preserve inherited educational practices simply because they are inherited—the forces which in every society shy at change; which see in the slightest progressive act some threat to the achievements of our forefathers; which oppose experimentation not because of understanding what a particular experiment involves but, more likely, because they lack such understanding.

Voices of the old reaction are not, of course, stilled. "Loyalty" oaths, laws against "communist" teachers, dismissals of college professors in half a dozen institutions over a brief period of months—these are serious.

Nevertheless, the old reaction has not succeeded in destroying

or even completely controlling education in America. Its inability and failure to argue its case intelligently is usually as marked as the ability of liberal educators to do so.

The New Reaction is a different matter. Chancellor Hutchins insists that he favors freedom of inquiry. He has fought legislative efforts to paint the University of Chicago with a "red" brush. He goes so far as to criticize vested interests, trustee autocracy, and the decline of financial support of education. He is known, indeed, as one of America's most liberal university spokesmen. He has become famous as a leading exponent of the St. John's plan for undergraduate education, as well as the Great Books program for adults. He has advocated world government. Reviews of his own books have agreed that here at last is a voice in education, though not always a friendly voice, which is courageous, vigorous, honest.

In addition to these qualities, the Chancellor possesses an astute intellect. As contrasted with the naïveté of many reactionaries, his philosophy of education is argued not only eloquently but consistently. And it is based upon profound, age-tested premises.

For all these reasons the position this leader expounds carries weight in shaping American education. It carries weight, however, not for these reasons merely, but also because the New Reaction conforms with strong tendencies in the social, economic, and political period through which we are now rapidly moving. How it may do so, and how these tendencies may be counteracted, we shall discuss later. Meanwhile let us summarize some characteristics of the Chancellor's doctrine.

II

A large part is in the nature of criticism. He finds five principal faults with college education today: the love of money, a misconception of democracy, a false notion of progress, a distorted idea of utility, and anti-intellectualism. His attack upon anti-intellectualism is militant. He accuses educators of conspiring to prepare young people for vocations and thus of neglecting the principles upon which those vocations should

depend. He insists that law schools, for example, fail because they attempt to imitate practical experience rather than to understand the unifying and generalizing theories of law. He points out how this vocational emphasis results in teaching of fads. Practical experience rather than scholarship thus comes to be, often, the criterion by which a professor is appointed. In short, empirical, pragmatic, and utilitarian education is enthusiastically opposed because it confuses the transitory with the permanent, because it denies or neglects the power of reason to seek for and find universal truths, and because in its adulation of facts it ignores the principles which give significance to those facts.

The plan which Chancellor Hutchins advocates to meet these difficulties is simple but drastic. He mentions that the function of elementary and secondary schools is to prepare citizens to be self-supporting and politically responsible, and that this means to follow the dictates of a given society not to improve it. Any other function of the lower schools is superfluous and should be abolished.

On the college level, he proposes a junior college of four years extending through the sophomore year, and a university period of about three more years. The junior college would be open to every literate citizen, and would absorb the younger generation until the twentieth year. Its curriculum would consist of "the permanent studies"—the classics of such great fields as philosophy and literature—and in addition grammar, rhetoric, logic, and mathematics.

Those who pass these subjects of "general education" satisfactorily would go on to the university where they study in three fields: metaphysics, natural science, and social science. The latter two, however, would be subordinate to the first, for students would continue to focus their attention not on data of the sciences, but on first principles which data help merely to illuminate. Mr. Hutchins would set up research institutes adjacent to the university, though not a part of it, where the collection of data for this purpose of illumination would be carried

on. The personnel of the research institutes, incidentally, would not even hold membership in the university faculty.

Just how this program would be set up in America is not discussed, though Mr. Hutchins believes the technical difficulties not insuperable. In any case, without its adoption empiricism and vocationalism will continue to strangle the higher learning until, finally, it may die altogether.

III

It is obvious, of course, that no critical educator today would deny all these charges. That vocationalism has gone to extremes; that fact-finding for the sake of finding facts frequently becomes a ridiculous game of tail-chasing; that thousands of students are pursuing university work utterly unsuited to them —such evils are only too prevalent throughout American education.

In our discussion, however, it is worthwhile to concentrate on one major issue, since this is the point of departure for most of the other charges by Mr. Hutchins. We refer to his contention that the progressive and empirical philosophy of education which predominates in America lacks a unified foundation, a consistent set of principles and purposes.

Now if we translate his implications, we are justified in inferring that Chancellor Hutchins is really attacking—notwithstanding that he himself is called a liberal—the whole spirit and substance of liberalism. For liberalism, though it has many implications, is in its philosophic meaning most closely related in America to the modern scientific method of empirical, impartial, objective analysis and synthesis—a method which by its very structure commits itself to nothing absolute except the absence of commitment.

As a matter of fact, there is much cogency in the contention that the greatest weakness of liberalism is its overemphasis upon method, its underemphasis on content; upon the tolerant spirit of scientific investigation which is intolerant of any other spirit. The liberal philosopher is notoriously hostile to absolutism in metaphysics. His quest for certainty is seldom in the direction

of a positive or substantial goal. His search for truth is never among criteria of the past which can serve as reliable criteria for the future. His search rather is always in the present—a present which recedes as rapidly as new problems arise to upset whatever momentary satisfactions he achieves.

In order to emphasize the central distinction, we have oversimplified liberalism. For instance, Professor John Dewey, America's great philosopher and liberal, is actually less liberal in the sense suggested than many of his disciples. He has advocated a program of social reform quite direct and sweeping. Yet he is so dedicated to the hypothetical character of all means and ends that even his courageous liberalism is chilled with tentativeness.

At any rate, one cannot easily deny Mr. Hutchins' assertion that the "most characteristic feature of the modern world is bewilderment. It has become the fashion to be bewildered. Anybody who says he knows or understands anything is at once suspected of affectation or falsehood. Consistency has become a vice and opportunism a virtue. We do not know where we are going, or why; and we have almost given up the attempt to find out."*

IV

But what, more exactly, are the positive attributes of the doctrine which Mr. Hutchins thinks would correct this situation?

At times he denies he has one. "I am not here arguing for any specific theological or metaphysical system," he declares. "I am insisting that consciously or unconsciously we are always trying to get one. I suggest that we shall get a better one if we recognize explicitly the need for one and try to get the most rational one we can. . . . If we can revitalize metaphysics and restore it to its place in the higher learning, we may be able to establish a rational order in the modern world as well as in the universities."

But as already intimated he does, nevertheless, suggest the

* This quotation and most of those which follow in this chapter are from *The Higher Learning in America*, by permission of the Yale University Press.

kind of metaphysics he would adopt, and he goes even farther than this: he suggests the kind he would reject. The nature of the former, we shall see, becomes clearer by contrast with the latter.

The kind he accepts belongs to what we called, in our preceding chapter, the school of perennialism. He repeatedly refers to the need of "truth for truth's sake." He lauds the intellectual virtues of the greatest rationalist of the Middle Ages, St. Thomas Aquinas. Cardinal Newman is quoted for favoring the cultivation of the intellect as "beautiful, perfect, admirable, and noble in itself." He criticizes the master of induction, Francis Bacon, for having overemphasized fact-finding, and insists on "the logical priority of rational analysis." He criticizes Thomas Jefferson for failing to advocate, as the supreme duty of American education, "the intellectual love of God." He declares, "My thesis is that . . . our salvation lies not in the rejection of the intellect but in a return to it." His principal authorities are the founders of philosophic idealism in western thought—Plato and Aristotle. In one place he hints that since we cannot return to the theology of the Middle Ages, we must return to the rationalistic metaphysics of the Greeks.

Surely it is clear why Chancellor Hutchins cannot be classed with the usual opponents of liberal education. On the contrary, if such a rationalism as he assumes is maintained consistently we cannot possibly refute it. We cannot do so because it is based on a priori categories, and the a priori is simply a technical term for that which lies beyond the processes of scientific verification. It is that which we accept as the absolute foundation of everything else: the moment we take it into the area of such verification we resort to empirical, factual analysis which is rejected by the philosophy with which we begin. As a matter of fact, neither Plato nor Thomas has ever been refuted logically. The Idea of Good, for example, which appears at the apex of Plato's system is, in last analysis, a mystical intuition which one either does or does not have, depending upon one's intellectual "purity." And just as it is necessary to approach Plato with the utmost respect for the profundity and invulnerability of his

thought, so it is necessary to differentiate completely the New Reaction—resting as it does upon the authority of such immortals as Plato himself—from the old reaction which rests upon little except social lag and fear of novelty.

Yet it is possible to criticize the New Reaction. Platonism may be opposed from the standpoint of an essentially *different* philosophy; Mr. Hutchins' perennialism may be open to serious objection when viewed in the perspective of a distinct alternative—an alternative which obviously could not be liberalism, as such, so long as we concede its weaknesses. At least by contrast, however, we may be able to decide more intelligently whether or not to throw our allegiance with the doctrine he so persuasively advocates, or whether to reject it in favor of another.

V

Meanwhile, why should Mr. Hutchins' doctrine be judged thoroughly reactionary? Now reaction may be defined as the rejection of or opposition to a current trend, and the advocacy of a position which is not essentially new but consists, on the contrary, of a return to or rehabilitation of a position dominant long before the current trend began. Several illustrations will show why the New Reaction conforms with this definition.

The Chancellor insists, first of all, that the great principles of truth which it is the purpose of education to reveal are immutable—a term usually connoting the “eternal” truths which have come down to us from the past. For example, he stresses the *constancy* of the judgments of men of learning in all ages. Again, he cites the eminent Platonist, Paul Shorey, for having pointed out that the good, the true, and the beautiful are something real beyond the flux of experience. Another authority, Whewell, is condoned for having seen that “the permanent studies,” which should form the core of any sound educational system, are largely ancient and medieval. Nowhere in his books, moreover, does Mr. Hutchins insist that his first principles of knowledge are actually to be discovered in a temporal future: his implication always is that these principles already exist even

though, like Plato's eternal Ideas, we may not always intuit them clearly.

The position here examined meets the definition of reactionary also in its interpretation of human nature. Aristotle is offered as authority for the assertion that the same education and habits go to make up a good statesman or a good man. Again, the intellectual virtues remain identical in any type of state. Finally, one purpose of education must be "to draw out the elements of our common human nature. These elements are the same in any time or place. The notion of educating a man to live in any particular time or place, to adjust him to any particular environment, is therefore foreign to a true conception of education."

A third illustration is the opposition to progress in any modern sense. The Chancellor talks about "false" progress, by which he means technological and empirical progress; but when we search for what he means by "true" progress we are unable to find his meaning except in terms of his perennialist premises—a meaning which, in the history of the concept of progress, would be defined after the fashion of a Hegel or an Augustine. Progress for them is of course an idealistic, timeless development of some inner principle of reality; it is ultimately identified with immutable truths which defy change. One cannot help recalling, incidentally, how Hegelianism became an apologia for the German autocracy of its time; how Augustine's conception of progress became a powerful weapon in the hands of the Church by warning that salvation in the City of God, the goal of history, would be denied all sinners.

VI

Mention of the social implications of Hegelian or Augustinian rationalism leads us to the most serious aspect of the New Reaction—its bearing on society itself.

We have seen that the pre-college level of education should serve, according to Mr. Hutchins, no social purpose of reform. There is no functional interaction, therefore, between school and society: to hope that the former might improve the latter

is futile or false; it will "merely succeed in ruining the schools." Young people during their most formative period must not be trained to take a critical approach to the status quo; on the contrary they must be discouraged from doing so. Mr. Hutchins thus manifests, on this score also, complete agreement with Plato, who conceived of public education in the *Republic* primarily as training in loyalty to the state.

Beyond sixteen, however, the study of truth for truth's sake begins. May we not hope, then, that at least in the junior college something of a critical spirit toward society will be aroused? But no: the purpose of the junior college is to teach "the permanent studies," not acquaintance with the world of actual events. Since the college cannot duplicate experience, since facts are at most a very subordinate part of education, young people need hardly learn authoritatively about war, capitalism, sex, as these affairs occur today; and since they learn relatively little regarding them, they can hardly be expected to react analytically to them. The classics, logic, or rhetoric which they study are disciplines as unsullied as possible by the empirical; so that only afterward, when they suddenly find themselves in the world outside, may they be expected somehow to achieve functional connection between these disciplines and war, capitalism, or sex. Mr. Hutchins is not evasive on this matter: "I will admit," he says, "that this general education will not be useful to its possessor in the popular sense of utility. It may not assist him to make money or to get ahead. It may not in any obvious fashion adjust him to his environment or fit him for the contemporary scene. It will, however, have a deeper, wider utility: it will cultivate the intellectual virtues."

The reactionary potentialities of this program are immense. During the period when young people are most likely to be active, adventurous, eager to share in the problems of society, they are isolated by the high wall of a formal curriculum. True, the New Reaction does not explicitly oppose social reorganization; rather there are moments when its need is suggested. But by far the surest way that we can hope to improve society is from above—that is, at the direction of an elite who survive the proc-

ess of educational elimination. They alone who grasp the first principles of truth—the supreme object of university study—are fitted to discover solutions for our social difficulties. There should be little if any opportunity for the use of metaphysical wisdom except by those who qualify for the university, and emerge at last rationally endowed. "The free and independent exercise of the intellect" by the learned elite—this alone "is the means by which society may be improved."

One recalls again the design of the *Republic*. It was to be governed wholly by guardians versed in the metaphysics of absolute idealism, guardians whose purpose was not at all, incidentally, the improvement of society through direct reconstruction, but improvement by preservation of the traditional Greek aristocracy.

VII

The social significance of the New Reaction may be seen, further, in the authoritarianism implicit in its criterion of truth. We observe, for example, that though "clear and distinct ideas" are the object of education, we are never given a clue as to precisely how we are to recognize them or distinguish them from confused or cloudy ideas. The great philosopher, Bishop Berkeley, was evidently more conscious of the problem than some of his disciples, for he suggested that unless we are directly in touch with the divine, we mere mortals can distinguish truth from error only by practice and experience—a method Mr. Hutchins disavows.

Of course the ultimate criterion of truth for the good Bishop was God; and in the history of philosophy that criterion has always been for rationalists some final and unquestioned authority. Indeed, history discloses that when a philosophy of this kind has dominated an era it ultimately becomes, almost without exception, a sanction for traditional, established power. To Plato, as already noted, the mystic knowledge of Ideas was to be the guide of philosopher-kings in his authoritarian state; freedom of inquiry, which Plato like Mr. Hutchins advocated, was to be freedom within the boundaries of truth so known. To Thomas, the first principles of metaphysics became at last a

matter of faith through which the Church maintained supremacy over civilization for long centuries.

And recently, in Germany and Italy, an idea which those in power regarded as "clear and distinct" dared not be questioned by citizens who wished to live in peace, or teach in universities. "Jewish science," for example, was outlawed by the Nazis; "relativity" was expelled from their vocabulary because a Jew discovered it—a consequence which follows quite consistently from premises denying the need of experimental verification as the test of truth. The facts with which Einstein checked his hypothesis, his empirical method of analysis, have little value so long as our criterion is on a wholly different level—so long as those with sufficient certainty of mind are able to reveal, and to enforce, basic principles from which no one can appeal. And who, after all, could logically prove to Hitler that Hitler's ideas were wrong? By arbitrary but authoritative fiat they were for him, as they were for Augustine, perfectly clear and distinct.

But we are not arguing for an analogy of the New Reaction with fascism as such. Mr. Hutchins' position is far more consistent, honest, and intelligent; Hitlerism was a conglomeration of hateful dogmas which rationalized that regime from day to day. The important fact, however, is that Mr. Hutchins' distrust of the empirical, libertarian approach to education lends support, in fact encourages, a similar distrust which is growing today in many areas of the world—a distrust which in centuries past has quite invariably crystallized into some form of political, religious, economic authoritarianism. It is more than likely that the New Reaction would be utilized by whatever forces of this same kind should appear in America, indeed are already appearing. For not only does it turn pastward for its principles, thus helping to justify opposition to genuinely progressive movements in, for example, the field of social experimentation; but it provides an avenue of escape for those who find the liberal way of life too strenuous or disappointing.

VIII

Thus is it not probable that the New Reaction—whether it denies that probability or not—is incipiently both a *reflection of*

tensions already tightening beneath the tranquil surface, and a *prognostication* of their increase? No one of course, not even Mr. Hutchins were he so disposed, could give a simple answer to this question; the network of relations is too subtle and complex. Yet one cannot simply dismiss the feeling that the New Reaction becomes vastly more insidious and perilous if viewed, not as an isolated theory, but in the setting of current economic and political history. So viewed, what Mr. Hutchins advocates is not essentially unique: it is in profound sympathy ideologically with the anti-empirical retrogression of the higher learning wherever the growing influence of radically democratic trends seriously disturbs entrenched power.

Is it not true, at any rate, that when an established order is threatened, as ours repeatedly is threatened by depressions and wars, is it not true that there have always been in similar situations three principal ways to meet the crisis—ways of which Mr. Hutchins' is one?

For there is always, first, the way of compromise—of patching here, plugging there, the method of openminded trial-and-error which zigzags bewilderingly from New Deals to no deals at all; and is too often the relatively aimless way of liberalism.

Second, there is the way of attacking the predominant system at its weakest point and, finding it bad, advocating an escape from its turmoils and conflicts. We can, for instance, set up a system of education which pursues the truth for its own sake, serenely oblivious to the experiences beyond our ivory tower, conveniently indifferent to conflict with the socio-economic status quo.

Finally, we can attack the predominant system, not to destroy but to rebuild, using certain of the materials of that system as a base, but radically correcting its weaknesses by stronger, steadier premises and objectives.

It is the appeal of this third way which explains, we think, why a slowly increasing number of educators are for the first time trying seriously to estimate the reconstructionist kind of challenge. If we believe, these educators are saying, that the progress of natural science since Francis Bacon must continue

unrestricted, that the painfully won victories of empiricism are not to be lost, we must weigh the contention that the philosophy of reactionism resents those victories whenever they come to be used for social purposes *other than its own*. We must recognize that, as or if the crisis sharpens in America, the New Reaction will appeal increasingly to those who fear the trend toward more socialized democracies—democracies where science and nature, freed from restrictions, would be mutually owned, cooperatively nourished. We must be ready to perceive that mere liberalism, itself so often anemic in tactics and wavering in conviction, may in its defensive position be helpless before an offensive thrust at its existence. If, as is possible in our rapidly changing America, the reconstructionist philosophy grows increasingly influential, it will be because it precipitates the values of liberalism into a program proportionate in conviction and strategy, but diametrically opposed, to the forces augured by the New Reaction.

four

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION ON THE FIRING LINE

When Professor Dewey published *Democracy and Education* in 1916, he could not possibly have anticipated the prolonged controversy which this great book (not, of course, one of St. John's One Hundred) would do so much to excite. Supported by the founding three years later of the Progressive Education Association, Mr. Dewey's version of progressivism, to which other leaders both before and after also contributed much, has been the cause of literally countless debates, articles, books, experiments, enriching interpretations, amazing misinterpretations.

There is little doubt, moreover, that for twenty years following his major contribution to educational philosophy, progressivism was very much on a militant offensive. No other theory was so brilliantly, convincingly expounded in the schools. No other succeeded in winning so many converts wherever it was

given a fair hearing. No other generated so many innovations in curricula and teaching.

During this whole period, both indifference and strong opposition continued, certainly. The majority of schools functioned pretty largely as they had for half a century or more. Occasionally some courageous pedagogue would bring forth a volume daring to question the premises from which Mr. Dewey and his associates argued their case. Something more than a decade ago, however, fresh breezes of revolt could be felt in the climate of the schools. An "Essentialist Committee for the Advancement of Education" was organized upon an anti-progressive platform. In Chapter III, we reviewed the attack led by Chancellor Hutchins—an attack which, coming from the head of a leading university strongly influenced by Dewey himself, immediately aroused storms of dispute with its neo-Thomist challenge to every important axiom of progressive education.

Meanwhile, pressure groups, some of them classified by official sources as pro-fascist, litter the desks of principals and school boards with "proofs" that the Deweys and Ruggs of education are Bolsheviks disguised. The Hearst newspapers have for years been sniping at progressivism as the chief cause of evils like juvenile delinquency. And in many cities where Hearst owns no newspapers himself, he manages to arouse the public through his syndicated columnists who have missed no opportunity to blame progressive education for virtually every sin of modern man.

How serious, actually, is this concerted, bitter attack? What does it mean? And where may it lead?

II

To answer these questions, we must first of all try to indicate something of the spirit and substance of progressive education itself. When a few pages back we spoke of Mr. Dewey as a great philosopher and a great liberal, we did not regard the connection between these characteristics as coincidental. Most of his life has been devoted to expressing the meaning of a culture distinguished by virtues peculiarly liberal in quality: by

practical-mindedness and initiative, by confidence in the capacity of men to solve their own problems through their own creative intelligence, by respect both for individual freedom and social intercourse, above all by tolerant, experimental adventuresomeness.

And precisely such virtues as these become also the measure of successful education. Learning, Mr. Dewey shows, is the process of adjusting and readjusting oneself to a dynamic environment—a process which, to be effectively intelligent, must be motivated by vital, often controversial problems and interests of growing children in their own surroundings. It must encourage the freest possible curiosity and exploration. It must respect differences between individuals and groups. And it must practice cooperation in reaching workable solutions. Thus, whereas in the older types of school, knowledge tends toward fixity of content, students are classified and directed by static rules and superimposed disciplines, in the progressive type, courses overlap and develop flexibly from group to group and year to year, discipline arises from mutual understanding that order is helpful to achievement, and individual bents are encouraged to the utmost.

Now if the evidence is examined impartially, there can be little doubt that, despite many blunders, these and other methods of progressivism have produced significantly promising results. Important research studies (for example, *Education for What is Real* and *An Adventure in American Education*) show that, by and large, progressively trained children not only acquire as much knowledge as traditionally trained, but that in common skills like reading and writing, they become just as proficient. In addition, their morale is often higher, their cooperative spirit better, their critical attitudes and social consciousness keener. The evidence is not conclusive, of course. Yet if it is even partially as substantial as such studies indicate, the question as to why progressive education should be so thoroughly misrepresented, hated, and sometimes honestly opposed becomes all the more distressing.

III

At least four reasons, while not exhaustive, help to account for this phenomenon. The first is simply the widespread confusion and sheer ignorance which confront any departure from routinized practices—faults not merely of enemies of innovation but also of overzealous advocates. No one denies the silly extremes to which "child-centered schools" have occasionally gone. At the same time, we should recognize in all fairness that many timid, hostile, or misinformed educators find in these extremes a convenient alibi for resisting progressive improvements of whatever type.

The second reason is mainly economic. It stems from a recognition that, while many schools have already been able to accomplish a great deal even under budget handicaps, the establishment of modern, thoroughly progressive institutions throughout America would cost at least again as much as we have ever spent thus far for public education. The good progressive teacher knows more about the psychology of childhood than the average. He is sensitive to the crucial problems of modern social life. He wishes to become an active citizen of his community. And he tries to grasp the chief interconnections of all major fields of knowledge. These requirements mean longer and better training, more assurance of higher salaries, tenure—in short, professional status which few teachers now enjoy. But more than this, progressive schools need plentiful, up-to-date equipment for learning by doing and, most important of all, small enough classes so that teachers may work closely with each child, each group, as distinctive in itself.

Is such education financially feasible? Of course, say those who believe America can afford whatever it needs and can produce. Of course not, say the property-owners' associations, the big business groups, who fear higher taxes and oppose financial aid to the schools by the federal government.

The third reason is likely to be held, consciously or not, by the same groups who hold the second. The big and little Hearsts of America become frightened when public education aims to

be actually public—when it threatens to develop young citizens capable of analyzing the weaknesses of social institutions and economic practices; when it begins to teach the common people that they are sovereign in fact as well as theory; when therefore they seek to equate democracy with the processes of social evolution through their own efforts and intelligent capacities. So long as schools remain a means by which the average man learns to accept meekly, uncritically, his own subordination, those who have so often controlled public education can afford to tolerate progressivism as a crackpot academic scheme. When it begins to have a serious impact, they certainly cannot.

The fourth and final reason for the present onslaught upon progressive education is at once the most pervasive and complex. It brings us back to the deep cleavage between progressivists, on the one hand, and perennialists, on the other; and it compels us to take further note of the social milieu in which foes of progressive schools have themselves, for the first time in perhaps a quarter-century, now taken the offensive.

This milieu, we have said, has frequently been characterized by the term, liberal. Essentially it has assumed that America is a land of boundless opportunity; that we shall continue growing in a kind of endless progress if we only keep ourselves free from entangling commitments to any preconceived design, and refuse to be held shackled either by set means or static purposes. Thus the ends of American life—like the liberal philosophy itself—have usually been tentative and pluralistic; its means, too, have been constantly subject to variation and replacement by quite different means.

But recently this same milieu has been fraught with extraordinary tensions, bewilderments and fears. One might say, indeed, that we have been engaged in the second Thirty Years War of modern history: except for the false respite of the tinsel二十年代, the world since 1914 has never rested from revolution, civil strife, violence, and devastation. Yet it seemed to require the Great Depression of the thirties at home, even more than war abroad, to precipitate acute awareness that perhaps the very

way of life with which America had been so comfortably satisfied should be called in question.

We suggest that this strain of incongruity between rationale and reality accounts, in large degree, for a profound and earnest effort on the part of certain thinking men to supplant or supplement the liberal philosophy by one which, both in ends and means, is more solid and positive—a philosophy which, translated into educational equivalents, will supposedly produce citizens who are trained, not primarily in the virtues which the liberal glorifies, but rather in virtues designed to make them certain of themselves and of the goals which they must win if society is once more to be stable and harmonious.

We saw earlier how Mr. Hutchins and his colleagues find this certainty in perennial principles of truth and goodness laid down, for the most part, many centuries ago. They believe that only an intellectual elite to whom such principles have become self-evident are competent to lead civilization out of the darkness and despair for which liberal attitudes and progressive programs are themselves gravely responsible. We saw too that, judged again from a social point of view, perennialism is far more dangerous than its disarming and sophisticated advocates lead many to suspect.

IV

Whether progressive education will successfully engage in a counteroffensive before mortal damage has been done cannot, obviously, now be foreseen. The fact remains that the attack upon it in some parts of the country, such as California, has caused retreat and retrenchment. In at least one city, Hearst newspapers shout gleefully that school after school is returning to the "three Rs." In many other cities, criticisms confuse both laymen and teachers by thousands. Various colleges are beginning to emulate the St. John's plan. The organized progressivists, under their new name, American Education Fellowship, are accused—falsely, we believe—of retreat. And the National Opinion Center of the University of Denver finds from a survey

that "a return to traditional subjects and methods would be more popular than more modern and progressive education."

No doubt this public attitude is in part the result of ignorance; in part, of conservative-reactionary propaganda. Yet one may ask again whether it may not also be the reflex of subtly persistent dissatisfaction toward the liberal way of life itself—a way which has become so disillusioning to millions, and for which such a philosophy as perennialism would provide an antidote. But if so, then the task of progressive education is to analyze its own weaknesses as realistically as possible, and to correct these not by rejection in favor of some escape to ancient metaphysics, but by strengthening and supplementing its own principles and practices.

First, then, the needed theory should emphasize, and strongly, new goals for American and world democracy. These goals should indicate the practicality of a reorganized economic system which will provide security and abundance for the average citizen while yet assuring his own direct participation in its control and operation. They should point to the fact and desirability of rapidly increasing interdependence not only within but between nations.

But, second, the kind of program with which the progressive movement should now concern itself, far from forcing individuals into straitjackets of conformity, should be quite the opposite in encouraging the kind of free self-expression which alone guarantees that the new America can be built out of the experiences and wants of the people themselves. But this can only mean, in turn, that the schools should be released both from encrusted pedagogical routines and domination by any groups except popular majorities; it means therefore ruthless exposure of those who now conceal their motives by new red-herring labels; it means, finally, that teachers and parents holding reconstructed democratic goals need to join with other forces in the community who conceive of public schools as rightful agencies of social change as well as mere stability.

Such a program, built upon the values of liberalism which still endure, in which vast numbers continue to have faith, and

from which they will turn only if institutional arrangements are not refashioned rapidly enough to assure these values fresh vitality, is the one decisive answer that progressivism can give its enemies. It is an answer, however, about which altogether too few citizens—in schools and out—are thus far vitally concerned. For to remain unconcerned in the tense years which lie just ahead is not only to imperil the richest, most indigenous contribution to the whole struggle for free public schools in America: to the extent that vital education is a necessary instrument of democratic order, it is to imperil the survival of that order itself.

five

AN INDUCTIVE APPROACH TO INTERCULTURAL VALUES

I

We should like here to continue our critical evaluation of progressivism in preceding pages by viewing a movement for which it has been in no small measure responsible: intercultural education. While we have found the strengths of progressivism to be great, one weakness to which further attention might be drawn is a tendency among some of its devotees to gloss over the necessity of basic philosophic analysis. Practicing progressivists are so eager to "get going" with their fine plans for turning education into concrete, active experiences that on occasion they seem impatient with the continuous importance of clarifying and explicating their own underlying premises.

More specifically with regard to value theory, one often hears it said, for example, that intercultural education rests upon such beliefs as "the brotherhood of man" or "the dignity of personality" or "the great democratic tradition of equality and free-

dom." Once these clichés are uttered, however, the topic of values ends. Apparently this is enough to satisfy many practitioners. Hence they move on immediately to the "important" task of implementation.

Now it is obvious that educators cannot on every occasion stop to re-examine the meaning and dependability of these clichés. They nevertheless are guilty often not merely of negligence, but of gravely weakening the entire structure they are trying to erect. For no structure is stronger than its foundations. When we ignore or merely assume that our foundation of values is entirely reliable so long as it consists of pleasant-sounding phrases with which few would quarrel, we threaten the whole program and purpose of intercultural relations. We are little better than the indoctrinators of religious or political absolutism: they too proceed from uncriticized premises; they too contribute to a weak culture in that its members have never learned, through the dialectic of self-criticism and opposition, whether their own beliefs are healthy and strong.

The question of whether the philosophy of progressivism does provide an adequate theory of value is a technical question which need not concern us here. Its most profound thinkers contribute richly to such a theory. What is now overdue, however, is a concerted effort at reformulation in terms appropriate to a period already passing the period of history of which Mr. Dewey's pragmatism is a high symbol.

II

The problem, so far as intercultural relations are concerned, is this. If you and I say that we regard as immoral the exploitations, discriminations, and segregations suffered by Negroes or Jews or Mexican-Americans, *why* most basically do we? Clearly, many others do not, for which they also must have reasons. Clearly, too, we should be able to show to ourselves and others why we support the kind of human order where exploitations, discriminations, and segregations would completely disappear; and where, instead, people of all colors, nationalities, and re-

ligions enjoy the same rights, privileges, and opportunities at every time and every place.

To fall back upon the doctrine of innate rights or Scholastic reasoning which "proves" that equality is a first principle, is little if any improvement over the kind of "lip service" which progressivists themselves offer to "the dignity of man."

An alternative is to begin with no preconceived statement of values, but to inquire of ourselves what we are most eagerly striving for. Even little children are capable of probing into their own drives, needs, and wants, and of answering in their own terms. Surely then it is not impractical for older students and adults to do so. Without at first going beyond our own experience, we can, if we try, articulate at least certain of our own deepest desires, and by communicating these we can refine our meanings to ourselves.

Moreover, as we continue moving from the physiological to the psychological levels, we can call upon the sciences of man to help us in our search. Psychology is essential, and if we turn to experts like Kurt Lewin, who have approached human nature from the viewpoint of its dynamic, patterned quality, we find support for an approach to ourselves as, first of all, "goal-seeking animals." Psychology, however, is by no means enough—until, at least, it is fused with the sciences of man in his relations with other men: economics, politics, sociology, and anthropology are especially fundamental. From W. I. Thomas we find support for the desire we have for security, new experiences, response, and recognition. From Robert S. Lynd we are more able to recognize the nature of our "cravings" even for such seemingly elusive satisfactions as "a natural tempo and rhythm" or a "sense of fairly immediate meaning." From social psychiatrists like Karen Horney we sense more clearly that often our frustrations are, at bottom, blockages in the way of goal-seeking and goal-winning, which derive not merely (as Freud would have it) from suppression of the id, but from the confusions and scarcities of a disintegrating culture.

The task of approaching the problem of values inductively is further complicated, however, by the question: "Who are

we?" More specifically in terms of intercultural relations, one of the most common and most potent of arguments against, say, racial equalitarianism is that great numbers of people in the world simply do not have this range of drives and wants which you and I—of the educated minority—may concede that we have. Granting, for example, that sexual satisfaction is virtually a universal want, how can it possibly be argued that the want of recognition or fairly immediate meaning is universal? And if it cannot be proved that our pattern of goal-seeking is common to others, are we not trying to impose that pattern upon dissimilar people?

III

In answer to these questions, it is necessary to admit frankly that neither religion nor science has established once and for all the precise number or order or quality of wants among diverse peoples. Indeed, since the whole history of human beings and of the cultures within which they live proves the pliability of goal-seeking proclivities, we must concede that such establishment is, in any case, impossible. All that can be shown, at the most, is about four important facts concerning who *we* are—whether a merely sophisticated minority, or a reasonably large majority of the races and nations of the world.

First, then, science, especially anthropology, again assists enormously in showing that, among all our differences, we do possess a striking number of similar wants and of similarly organized efforts to satisfy them.*

Second, these common denominators, however few in different periods of history, tend to multiply today as acculturation and assimilation accelerate through the impact of communication and transportation. In other words, as more and more people learn more and more about one another, they come closer to a minimum pattern of similar wants. Such a pattern is temporal and cultural, not eternal or metaphysical, to be sure. But that is all we can properly expect.

Third, the equally evident fact that disagreement about wants

* See Chapter XXI.

is still widespread by no means proves that this disagreement is insoluble. Rather, all it may prove is that civilization has failed to provide facilities by which agreement might be achieved. If, for example, Jeeter Lester of *Tobacco Road* seems satisfied with a diet of turnips, does this mean that here is in fact his entire goal of food satisfaction? Or does it simply mean that he has never learned enough either about the meaning of adequate diet, or of the possibility of winning such a diet for himself and his children, to know what he actually wants? By the same token, can the Negro hater be right in his contention that shiftlessness is more satisfying to Negroes than initiative and neatness, so long as he does everything in his power to prevent fair testing of the latter alternative?

Fourth, and following more or less directly from the above three points, the assertion that *our* wants and their satisfaction are therefore also *common* wants claims no more than that they are, or probably could be, those of the *majority*. No matter how seemingly universal a want may be, some individual or group may deny its presence—a denial resulting either from an insistence that the majority simply has failed to recognize its own goal-seeking interests accurately at some point, or from the sheer stubbornness or fanaticism of some individual or group. In either case, there is no way, so long as the democratic process functions in value formulation, by which the dissenting minority can or should be coerced into agreement. In fact, the minority may conceivably be right. If, as we assume, wants are empirical, and we learn and relearn about them continuously, then we of the majority may need to be convinced that a meaning we previously attached to a certain want has been quite fallacious. But even if the minority is wrong, and it is denying agreement from ulterior motives, we shall have to admit there is no way of finally *proving* it wrong. The subjective element in all human wants makes it possible for anyone to deny the existence of any particular want simply by insisting that he has no such experience as the majority has.

We come, then, to the inference that *the final criterion of intercultural values is the social consensus that can be attained*

about them. This criterion, as implied, has at least three essential steps in its complete application: (a) maximum presentation of evidence (especially of science, but also of art, history, religion, and all other spheres of human achievement) about what people want; (b) maximum communication of that evidence—a world-wide process which, of course, increases the exactitude of the evidence itself; and (c) maximum agreement among the widest possible range of people that, upon the basis of this evidence and communication, these are indeed the wants we most deeply seek to satisfy.

IV

Many questions remain. Values (or want-satisfactions) overlap, ramify, and sometimes appear contradictory. Also, they are so multiple that we need to ask whether they can be synthesized around some great normative generalization—whether, for example, *self-realization* (regarded in a social as well as individual context) could not be accepted as this kind of inductive outcome, and therefore be recognized as a meaningful, organic integration of many particular values.

Educationally, we should be concerned with the problem of how this necessarily abstract statement can be translated into effective intercultural understanding. Here is a question, however, that requires far more extensive treatment than we are now permitted. That a beginning should be made in the elementary school is obvious, for to inculcate the old ethical dogmas uncritically then is to make it well-nigh impossible for the secondary school to undo that inculcation later. Far better, it seems, would be the effort to avoid all use of such dogmas, and to substitute the richest possible experience with the meaning of wants among the widest range of children. In the secondary school, however, systematic examination of the nature of values is practical—in the earlier years as part of larger, functional projects, in the later years as specific units in value formulation. Yet even such units need not and should not become typically academic. Beginning with the living situations of young people wherever they are, they can gradually broaden to encompass the

situations of their parents, community citizens, and finally of peoples of distant places. That it can be done is certain, for it has been done,* not only on the high-school but on the college and adult levels as well.

And when it is done, is the social consensus always identical, always unanimous? Of course it is not. To a remarkable extent, however, that consensus, epitomized by self-realization, may be stated like this:

Most men do not want to be hungry: they cherish the value of *sufficient nourishment*.

Most men do not want to be cold or ragged: they cherish the value of *adequate dress*.

Most men do not want uncontrolled exposure either to the elements or to people: they cherish the value of *shelter* and *privacy*.

Most men do not want celibacy: they cherish the value of *sexual expression*.

Most men do not want illness: they cherish the value of *physiological and mental health*.

Most men do not want chronic insecurity: they cherish the value of *steady work, steady income*.

Most men do not want loneliness: they cherish the value of *companionship, mutual devotion, belongingness*.

Most men do not want indifference: they cherish the value of *recognition, appreciation, status*.

Most men do not want constant drudgery, monotony, or routine: they cherish the value of *novelty, curiosity, variation, recreation, adventure, growth, creativity*.

Most men do not want ignorance: they cherish the value of *literacy, skill, information*.

Most men do not want continual domination: they cherish the value of *participation, sharing*.

Most men do not want bewilderment: they cherish the value of *fairly immediate meaning, significance, order, direction*.

* See Chapter XVIII.

six

PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE, AND EDUCATION: A PARTNERSHIP

The perennial vitality of the philosophic enterprise is nowhere more aptly illustrated than in the question of philosophy's relation to science—a relation which we have anticipated in our preceding discussion of the scientific factor in value-seeking. Not only is this one of the oldest questions in the history of thought; it is also one of the most debated on the intellectual frontier of today. The fact that it has seldom if ever retreated wholly into the background is sufficient indication that its implications are exceedingly controversial and far-reaching. It is not one, therefore, with which education alone is concerned; rather it occurs wherever science and philosophy flourish at all.

Nevertheless, because educational theory and practice are or should be at the center of living, the strains and conflicts which prevail throughout the world of this generation are felt by education with unusual acuteness. And so in the case of philos-

ophy's relation to science: while one cannot and should not limit consideration of the question to any one field, we shall more than likely find it crystallized and symbolized fairly well within education itself.

Today there are at least three outstanding approaches to that question—approaches which, for want of better terms, we may call "positivism," "absolutism," and what we have already been calling "reconstructionism." None of these labels is entirely satisfactory; labels never are. Positivism, for example, might better be called "factualism" to distinguish it from Comte's philosophy. Despite this limitation, the thesis we shall defend is, in brief, that the first two approaches, positivism and absolutism, are both unsound and unsatisfactory. The third, reconstructionism, offers at least some hope of dealing with the question fruitfully. But we also should anticipate that, within the limitations of a few paragraphs, no one could be expected to disentangle any of the three with any conclusiveness. It is possible to mention here only a few outstanding aspects.

II

Positivism and absolutism represent extreme opposites as to the relation of science to philosophy. The first holds that, because nothing whatever remains of philosophy to justify any claim to serviceability, no really defensible relationship can be established at all: science is itself the be-all and end-all of knowledge; philosophy is at best a relic of an earlier age when men resorted to sterile speculation because they lacked more productive devices. The second, absolutism, holds that, because philosophy consists of knowledge which is for the most part distinct from scientific knowledge, therefore again no integral relationship exists between philosophy and science: since the latter becomes ultimately important only to the extent that it is evaluated by the principles of the former, the relation of philosophy to science is at most one of superior to inferior knowledge.

We know that both positivism and absolutism have their advocates within the field of modern education. The educational

positivist is in agreement with the American scholar who not long ago declared that "political science, to become a science, should first of all obtain a decree of divorce from the philosophers." What this really means is that the collection and verification of data by strictly objective research is alone academically respectable. Education is a science, therefore, aiming at precisely the standards by which the natural sciences have achieved such astonishing progress. The rapid development of fields like educational psychology is proof enough that nothing is worth much, if any, attention except the rigidly circumscribed evidence which we obtain by techniques like measurement.

Absolutism, on the other hand, is a reaction against the exclusiveness of scientific method, and of the factualism and relativism which that method generates. There is nothing new, of course, in the search for first principles immune to the ravages of physical, social, or personal change: the effort is so much older than modern science, indeed, that absolutism's most brilliant American advocate, Professor Mortimer J. Adler, quite understandably believes that the major issues confronting modern life can be settled largely in favor of the traditional doctrines of Aristotle and Thomas. For what this resolution of the philosophy-science controversy actually does is to satisfy a habitual propensity of human nature to dissolve all uncertainties and questionings in a metaphysical sea of supposedly perennial, intuited realities. Thus philosophy becomes once more queen of the sciences—a sovereign queen by virtue of her power to determine truth, value, eternal law, unassisted by any authority other than herself—and God.

Of course, other viewpoints show affinity with positivism or absolutism in varying degrees. Thus the progressive educator is close to positivism in his pragmatic method, yet much more appreciative of philosophy than the extreme factualist. On the other hand, essentialist educators confess deep sympathy with absolutism; yet they often place science on a higher plane than do philosophers like Adler. We can barely mention these intermediate approaches here, suggesting meanwhile that their influ-

ence, especially progressivism's, upon the reconstructionist approach is more immediate than is either of the more extreme views.

III

The nature of reconstructionism in the present context will now become clearer in contrast with these extremes. Both of them fail to relate philosophy to science in any acceptable way because both of them misconceive the role of philosophy in the modern world. We add the phrase, "in the modern world," advisedly, because to some extent—though, as we shall see, not entirely—that role is shifting its character. It is shifting from the exclusively speculative, extra-scientific, sometimes esoteric discipline, to the *supreme critic, synthesizer, and recreator* of experience, including science itself. Let us see how.

When the educational psychologist, for example, engages in experimentation he utilizes various intellectual tools, such as the concept, "law"; and with these tools he works upon various objects, such as the object, "mind." While he is in the process of experimenting he presupposes that these tools and objects are in some sense trustworthy. He believes they *are* what they *seem* to be, otherwise he could no more proceed with any confidence in what he is doing than could a dentist who at every instant questioned whether he had selected the wrong drill or was operating upon the wrong tooth. In other words, the educational psychologist, like every scientist, works from a set of presuppositions which, by their very nature, are taken for granted while he is engaged in the experimental act.

The first of the philosopher's legitimate tasks, therefore, is to articulate these presuppositions, and to see whether the scientist is right in believing that they *are* what they *seem* to be. In this he is not accomplishing anything of which the scientist is necessarily incapable; indeed it is the scientist, or the philosopher working as a scientist, who first provides the presuppositions which later serve as the basis of experimentation. The point is, however, that when the scientist does choose to focus upon them he at that moment performs a philosophical task; and he does not always choose to do so for the excellent reason

that, if he did, he would seldom have time to experiment at all. Thus as scientific opportunities have expanded, the need for philosophy, instead of decreasing, has actually increased: unlike the ancient world where an Aristotle could succeed as both scientist and philosopher at once, problems have so multiplied in the modern world that the average scientist or average philosopher, far from trying to perform the other's tasks, has considerably more than he can do to perform even his own. The scientist, in short, engages in experimentation and gives society, including philosophers, his results; the philosopher examines the presuppositions of that experimentation and calls attention to their weaknesses and strengths.

The concept of "law" illustrates this function. The philosophy of science, aroused by the revolution in physics, is today again deeply concerned over the old puzzle of whether a natural law is an objective reality, or a human construction of observed regularities. The fact that a physicist, Professor P. W. Bridgeman, has perhaps been most responsible for reopening the question in its present form is proof that an exceptional scientist may still be an exceptional philosopher. But when we are engaged in asking what it is that a scientist means when he presupposes natural law, we are not philosophizing for the sake of philosophizing. We are aiming to do him fully as great a service, by checking his essential tools, as the scientist may do us when he successfully completes an experiment and acquaints us with the results.

IV

Illustrations of this first function of philosophy could be multiplied. One is tempted to ask whether much recent experimentation with intelligence has not too uncritically presupposed the objective existence of a mind analogous to other measurable external objects. Again, one is tempted to dwell upon the concern of philosophy for the presuppositions, not merely of scientific, but also of religious and other fields. But because the examination of presuppositions, while fundamental, is only one of philosophy's services to modern knowledge, let us turn to a

second function which indicates again its distinction from positivism and absolutism. This function is that of examining and clarifying relationships, first between the respective sciences, and second between the sciences and other fields of human experience.

So long as the scientist concentrates upon his own special area, he is not as a rule concerned directly with the relations of that area to others. It is true that the boundaries between astronomy, physics, chemistry, physiology, and other natural sciences are breaking down. Just as in dealing with presuppositions, therefore, no *a priori* reason exists as to why the scientist himself cannot perform the task of unification; certainly he himself provides the materials which make such unification possible; frequently he finds himself borrowing from allied fields in order to carry on his own research. But, again, most human beings are incapable of becoming several kinds of expert at once: the typical scientist cannot concentrate effectively upon his special field and simultaneously upon its universal relationships. Thus the second role of philosophy becomes—like the first—not less but more imperative as we move farther and farther away from the simplicity of ancient knowledge.

But philosophy also traces the connections between science and other fields. Just as the scientist may be preoccupied with his own specialty, so the artist or politician, for example, is likewise often too preoccupied to concern himself deeply with relationships. Occasionally when an artist such as Rivera or Mann does concern himself, art and philosophy are blended in one medium; but such universality is quite as rare as in the scientific world.

This relational obligation of philosophy is illustrated once more in education. Here, too, specialization has increased rapidly. Thus here, too, the need grows almost in direct proportion with that specialization to perceive parts in relation to wholes; to clarify, for instance, the fundamental linkages of biology and chemistry with the learning process; to detect the intricate connections between administration or curriculum, on

the one hand, and the social sciences, ethics, or religion, on the other.

Reference to fields like art and ethics now clearly indicates, however, that the philosophy of education aims not only at syntheses which *describe* the relations of particular departments to one another. It aims also at syntheses which incorporate *norms* of esthetic and spiritual value, of personal virtue and social worth. Thus it becomes at once the coordinator of educational specialties, the chief mediator between education and other branches of learning, and the link between achievements of the past and promises of the future. The relational responsibilities of philosophy are very large indeed—so large that they might easily intimidate us were we not to realize that at best their fulfillment is never more than approximate. They still differ, however, from absolutism in the respect that philosophy claims no esoteric or autonomous power of relationship; and from positivism in the respect that unity of experience—all available experience—is much more strongly emphasized as a legitimate expectation and hope.

V

Better understanding of these responsibilities may result from noting a last philosophical function, one which in a sense emerges from the other two. Philosophy in modern times has been differentiated from the traditional conception particularly by the fact that it no longer properly indulges in speculation detached from scientific and other kinds of experience. The effort of the absolutist to preserve this conception at all cost is one good reason why positivists have rebelled so completely against philosophy. We have tried to show that when it practices its first function, the examination of presuppositions, or its second, the integration of experience, philosophy claims no patent on either enterprise. Rather it just as freely utilizes the methods and results of, let us say, science and art as these utilize philosophy's. But it should be recalled that in advocating this broad, flexible conception of philosophy, the speculative aspect is not disowned entirely. Indeed it is this aspect, more perhaps

than any other, which suggests the term, reconstructionism, as demarcated from either of the opposite extremes.

In other words, this third function is a visionary one. Its purpose is not merely to take presuppositions apart but to reorganize them in fresh patterns, to invest them with further meaning. Its purpose, again, is not merely to synthesize the sciences in a strictly objective way but to energize them with ideal aims—in short, to reconstruct the areas of experience into designs which open unexplored vistas to the imagination.

One illustration must suffice. We hear today a great deal about education for democracy—a theme which, when not merely trite, demonstrates each of philosophy's principal tasks. It demonstrates the first because, before we can intelligently educate for democracy, we must ask what are the grounds of its meaning. It demonstrates the second because, before we can be sure that education serves democracy, we must ask how the one is related to the other. It demonstrates the third because, upon the basis of the first two functions, we may discover that democracy is not merely a society for which we *have* educated, or *now* educate, but that it is also a society of the future for which we *ought* to educate.

The distinction between reconstructionism and the other major approaches to the relation of science and philosophy is illuminating at this point. Absolutism, as represented by Mr. Adler, also favors the "democratic ideal." His, however, is not an ideal which emerges from the technological resources of science, or the creative energies of socialized art; it is demonstrated by the exclusive, ostensibly *a priori* principles of "reason" as such. One cannot actually disprove absolutism, of course, so long as its presuppositions are unquestionable to those who insist on so regarding them; so long as one refuses to subject one's beliefs to any test except the internal nature of the beliefs themselves; or particularly so long as the canons of science are regarded at the outset as inferior knowledge. If this much is so, however, the absolutist's ideal of "democracy," depending as it does on a circular definition of timeless and spaceless rationality equated with timeless and spaceless freedom, is

either an arbitrary proposition hypostatized as a reality, or it is the product, in spite of itself, of methods and data which are interwoven with science and other achievements of an evolving culture.

But reconstructionism, in its defense of the visionary service of philosophy, is dissatisfied as well with the extreme positivist. At one point absolutism is right ^{social purposes for democracy} will never be achieved by the description or collection of facts, or by the use of scientific method alone, however necessary these are to the wise achievement of good purposes. The excesses of educational research in neglecting the latter are unquestionably one good reason why to many people absolutism is so pleasing an antidote.

As a matter of fact, the worst blind-spot in the whole field of public education is its tragic indifference to just these purposes. We do not for a moment mean that we need resort to old-fashioned utopianism. We do mean that the emphasis in education must be radically shifted. Let psychology focus more carefully than hitherto upon such problems as the kind of wants human beings living together in groups must and can satisfy in order to be happy. Let ethics focus on the nature of values which are largely determined by these wants. Let religion focus on the temporal faith in humanity which science and ethics help in turn to validate. Let technology, economics, biology, sociology, political science, education explore together the realizable potentialities of abundance, health, and democratic control. A magnetic, workable, cooperative order, built through a giant effort of all fields of interrelated knowledge and culture—this is where, more than anywhere else, men may hope to bridge the hiatus between science and philosophy.

If we have seemed to stress unduly the future-looking (in this sense, speculative) function of philosophy to the neglect of its analytical or relational tasks, this is not because it is more fundamental. It is, however, the one which, while most of us are too largely ignoring it today, we can least afford to ignore. For democracy has little chance against the glowing promises, the false certainties of authoritarian regimes, if we cannot meet

the crucial obligation to provide other certainties and promises equally glowing, but true instead of false. At this grim juncture of history, the wholehearted and immediate cooperation of philosophy, science, and education is indispensable if we are to succeed before it is too late.

seven

THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AS PHILOSOPHY OF POLITICS

The ancient problem to be raised here for reconsideration in a modern context is expressed most strikingly not by a philosopher but by a novelist. In Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, the leading character, Rubashov, a prisoner, is writing in his diary while awaiting his turn as a defendant in the Moscow Trials:

The amount of individual freedom which a people may conquer and keep, depends on the degree of its political maturity . . . The maturity of the masses lies in the capacity to recognize their own interests . . . A people's capacity to govern itself democratically is thus proportionate to the degree of its understanding of the structure and functioning of the whole social body.

Now, every technical improvement creates a new complication to the economic apparatus, causes the appearance of new factors and combinations, which the masses cannot penetrate for a time. Every jump of technical progress leaves the relative intellectual develop-

ment of the masses a step behind, and thus causes a fall in the political-maturity thermometer. It takes sometimes tens of years, sometimes generations, for a people's level of understanding gradually to adapt itself to the changed state of affairs, until it has recovered the same capacity for self-government as it had already possessed at a lower stage of civilization . . .

The discovery of the steam engine started a period of rapid objective progress, and, consequently, of equally rapid subjective political retrogression. The industrial era is still young in history, the discrepancy is still great between its extremely complicated economic structure and the masses' understanding of it . . .

The mistake in socialist theory was to believe that the level of mass-consciousness rose constantly and steadily . . . We believed that the adaptation of the masses' conception of the world to changed circumstances was a simple process, which one could measure in years; whereas, according to all historical experience, it would have been more suitable to measure it by centuries. The peoples of Europe are still far from having mentally digested the consequences of the steam engine.*

The impact of this quotation upon us is not merely in what it says, but in what it suggests about events which have occurred in the short decade since the time of Koestler's novel. In this decade another war has been fought—a war which uniquely demonstrated at least three tremendous facts: first, that the world is capable of producing and distributing through integrated direction on a scale inconceivable even to the most optimistic heralds of the steam engine—that it now possesses such natural and synthetic resources, such skills and knowledge, as could, were they but rationally utilized, literally wipe poverty and disease from the earth's surface; second, that the hitherto separate parts of this same earth are no longer separate—that through technological achievements all nations, all races, all cultures are brought into face-to-face proximity from which there is no escape except annihilation; and third, that such annihilation is itself now only too terrible a practicality—a practicality which can be prevented, if at all, only as those who have the most to lose by atomic war (and they are most of the

* Quoted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

people) awaken in time to the grim peril which confronts them.

These facts are familiar. Yet the heavy responsibility they place upon education is by no means so familiar. We are confronted with the need not only to re-examine the import of what we have been doing but of redetermining what we should do. And what we should do is connoted by the quotation from Koestler: *it is to determine whether and, if so, how we may mobilize our competences for the supreme imperative of bridging the chasm which now divides common understanding from the technological and other objective developments of our historic period.* To put it differently, our first imperative is to make as certain as cooperative intelligence, dexterity, and courage are capable of making certain that the human masses of the earth will learn in time to channel the giant energies, to train the giant machines, of this mid-century in behalf of common interests—and thus in behalf of peace, abundance, dynamic cultural evolution, happiness. In short, education in its comprehensive sense should become the co-partner of politics—the politics of comprehending and implementing popular government on a world-wide scale. The philosophy of education thereby becomes primarily concerned with the foundations upon which this co-partnership functions.

II

If, however, we are to dedicate ourselves to this immense and difficult objective, our initial duty is to assess realistically and to devise strategies for overcoming the obstacles in our way. Three such obstacles may be chosen for brief analysis.

The first is the inference which Rubashov draws from his own argument—namely, that, because mass understanding always lags behind social accomplishment, therefore workable self-government in the foreseeable future is impossible, on the one hand, and a professedly benevolent dictatorship of indefinite duration is inevitable, on the other hand. This point of view, as we know, exerts vast influence upon our generation; indeed, it has slowly become the single most compelling adver-

sary of the democratic conviction that the average person even now can learn how and for what purposes to engage in popular rule. True, as Rubashov also reminds us, the founders of modern socialism were more optimistic about such competence than are their powerful successors. In practice, nevertheless, it is the Rubashovs who seem to have won: the Soviet dictatorship not only shows little evidence of withering away with either the speed or completeness predicted by orthodox Marxism; in some ways it has apparently grown much stronger.

A second resistance in the path of government by and for an educated people is induced by the hard realization that understanding of social processes and structures is by no means assuredly increasing at a rate commensurate with popular requirements—that, rather, it may be in many cases actually decreasing. Moreover, to a great extent technology is again ironically responsible: we are thinking here, of course, of our powerful engines of public opinion. Nor can we dispute the fact that the newspaper, magazine, photograph, motion picture, radio, and now television are in largest part rigidly controlled by forces benefiting by as wide a disparity as possible between mass comprehension and social import. So dexterously indeed do they now manipulate the average mind that one may even inquire whether they are not, in actuality, perhaps more determinative of popular attitudes and habits than is the whole of organized formal education.

That public opinion sometimes serves to awaken people to their own larger interests should also, of course, be recognized. Partly because of it, though more largely for such other reasons as the rapid growth of self-enlightening mass movements, the oppressed millions in countries like India and China gradually become more articulate, more restless, more indignant than ever before in recorded history. Yet, at the same time, this phenomenon of mass awareness nervously incites those so largely in control of public opinion to develop all the more ingenious techniques for keeping the chasm wide.

The last obstacle which may be chosen to illustrate the scope of our key problem is the present status of education itself.

Despite the commendable pronouncements of American school leaders, an astounding array of evidence can be mustered to show how often democratic ideals become hypocritical shibboleths concealing autocratic types of practice. Granting numerous exceptions, the fact is that administrators and teachers alike still act as the deliberate, naive, or simply timid servants of those forces of contraction which spread confusion and distortion about such basic meanings as public operation of the industrial system. Observe, for example, the alacrity with which the ordinary school helps to oil and fuel the very engines of public opinion to which we have referred.

Nor are the obstacles induced by the status of current education confined to practices like these. Educational theory, also, frequently renders conscious or unconscious support to misunderstanding rather than understanding, to social acquiescence rather than activity. Here again we are limited to merely one or two examples. One is the sort of philosophy, whatever its name, which helps at least indirectly to undermine full confidence in self-government by assuming that men are not, after all, sufficient judges of what is good for them—that accordingly some transcendental fountainhead of goodness is required upon which men may draw when desperate or doubtful of their own sovereign capacity. A second, quite different from the first, is the sort of philosophy which limits itself chiefly to methodological considerations; and which, therefore, despite its more consistent respect for man's right to serve as his own exclusive governor, discourages the full exercise of that right by shunning commitment to those concrete cultural designs which are both compulsions and symbols of political maturity.

We have now perhaps sampled enough of the difficulties integral with the central educational-political problem of our time, so that we may turn to certain more positive considerations. The aim of these considerations—besides helping to clarify the rather oversimplified generalizations already outlined—is again the central one of bridge building: of providing a continuous and trustworthy span between the two shores of common enlightenment and objective social achievement. The

blueprint of such a span may be considered around at least five buttresses. These may be called, respectively, an adequate theory of human nature; an adequate theory of social forces; an adequate theory of the state; an adequate theory of government; and an adequate theory of normative commitment. Each of these is connected with the others by the two great cables of an adequate theory of education and of politics.

III

Of all five philosophic buttresses, the first, concerning human nature, is thus far the most satisfactory in its present stage of formulation. By both anticipating and utilizing the investigations of modern experimental psychology, philosophers of a naturalistic and organicistic preference have been converging for at least two generations toward the guiding hypothesis that human beings are best characterized in terms of a complex, dynamic fusion of drives. This hypothesis, to which the gestalt, functional, behaviorist, Freudian, and other psychologies have all contributed richly, has now reached sufficient crystallization for us confidently to declare that educational method could and should become transformed—transformed in so far, that is to say, as child development, emotional-intellectual growth, and other vital aspects of learning-as-living in their more individualized emphases are properly concerned.

In the perspective of our theme, this fruitful approach to human nature has both its positive and negative aspects. Positively, it supports the prime political assumption of democracy that people of every race, nationality, religion, or social status are sufficiently alike in their basic structures, energies, potential abilities, to reach a vastly higher level of competence, self-reliance, and achievement than social opportunity has thus far typically offered. Or, still more relevantly, the capacities of human beings for appreciating the requisites of complete self-government are now proving to be, not merely a pleasant sentiment, but a demonstrable expectation—an expectation supported even by scientific recognition that the desire for self-government, as one form of participation, is itself a basic drive

of man. The problem for us thus becomes one of charging these capacities with the kind of educational energy which no longer conceals or warps economic and similar meanings, but rather reveals and translates them into democratic institutions consistent with such meanings.

Negatively, however, the contemporary theory of human dynamics has largely failed to cope with just this problem of translation. For the most part it has neither asked nor answered forthrightly the crucial question of what kind of humane order is essential so that human potentialities may flower to the maximum. In the degree of its concentration upon the psychological aspects of education to the neglect of the sociological, we venture the severe criticism that recent educational theory becomes thus far an irresponsible theory. It has not clearly recognized—rather it has evaded—the direct and logical consequence of its own priceless contribution; namely, the double necessity at once to destroy and to create social arrangements according to whether these frustrate or release for satisfaction the wants of the largest possible majority of men.

IV

The need of a second buttress, an adequate theory of social forces, follows in part from the first. In order that human nature may reach the heights of fulfillment of which we now know it is capable, we are required not only to reconstruct institutional patterns but to analyze, utilize, or paralyze, as the case may be, those forces in our culture which accelerate or retard such reconstruction.

Here educational theory thus far has been woefully weak, so weak that we can scarcely point to a single outstanding educational contribution even remotely comparable to those bearing upon human nature. Take this instance: one of the most seminal, if not the single most seminal, of American contributors to a theory of social forces is still scarcely known to the teachers of our public schools, or perhaps even to most of us who teach these teachers. We refer, of course, to Thorstein Veblen.

To the extent that such a theory becomes adequate, it will

surely recognize, for example, the potency of the irrational in all kinds of group relationships. It will diagnose and measure the stubborn ethnocentric allegiances and intergroup conflicts incipiently or overtly manifested in virtually all racial, national, religious clusterings. It will face head-on the flamboyant issue of the struggle between economic classes in all its subtle as well as obtuse forms. It will acquaint citizens, young and old, with the surreptitious and devious exertions of the forces which shape public opinion. It will ask and seek to answer the persistent question of how the still largely latent, yet also tremendous and constructive, power of the common peoples may be released and directed through democratic means in behalf of the building of a world-wide democratic culture.

V

A theory of the state, the third foundation required by our blueprint, has likewise been anticipated. The irrational factor in social forces, to take one instance, is demonstrated only too tragically by the pressures exerted by one state against another—pressures which, when resisted too heavily by counterpressures, generate war.

Yet it is this very power potential in the state which requires equally realistic appraisal by educational theory. Aside from the complicated question of whether supreme coercive power is not the prime differentiating quality of statehood, it is difficult any longer to deny that no state is actually a state which cannot authorize and enforce obedience to its own mandates. Such authorization and enforcement may, to be sure, assume a variety of organizational forms. Thus in an autocracy or oligarchy power is exercised over, rather than by, majorities—a kind of exercise which, under other guises, still characterizes too many modern states. Supreme coercive power need not and certainly should not, however, be of this kind: rather a compelling requirement of which education should be cognizant today is to guarantee that such power is exercised in behalf of and exclusively for the widest obtainable compass of peoples on an international plane. In short, a theory of the state appropriate

to the revolutionary conditions thrust upon us by the dubious alliance of economics, militarism, and natural science needs to embrace the coercive powers of separate states by a still more coercive power—a supremely enforceable power over all states. It is not too much to insist, if life itself remains precious to men, that international sovereignty is the first item on civilization's agenda for survival.

It follows that a philosophy of education integrated with a philosophy of the state will also include a defensible conception of the relations of parts to the whole. Within America, the demand is, of course, that of establishing a functional association between the "pluralism" of localities, states, and regions, on the one hand, and the "monism" of the nation, on the other hand. Again, however, this demand is by no means confined to America alone: a far more urgent imperative, we reiterate, is for a whole never yet achieved in history—a *world* which is whole.

At least one other familiar, though important, constituent should be added to our third buttress. This is the theory of the positive welfare state of public service as a much more urgent approach to our closely knit industrial culture than the negative state of our *laissez-faire* past. The state, in other words, has a growing number of constructive duties to perform in behalf of popular well-being; and it is one of education's cutting edges to analyze these duties as exactly as possible. Thus, to select a particularly controversial illustration, education, instead of assuming as a matter of course that federal direction of the schools must be rejected *a priori* as contrary to the whole tradition of local autonomy, should scrupulously consider the case for such direction. In the same way that the service state now begins, even in America, to recognize its national obligations to the unemployed, the sick, or the aged, and to establish standards appropriate to human welfare, so it should begin also to recognize such obligations and standards in the education of all citizens. The core issue here is not federal *versus* local control: it is whether federal control can be more efficient and more effective at the same time that it is indisputably responsible to the majority. To learn how to provide wide two-way traffic lanes between

centralized authority and decentralized administration, according to principles roughly analogous to those which the Tennessee Valley Authority has already experimentally provided, is another of education's high priority tasks.*

VI

The fourth great theoretical need is an adequate theory of government. If the state be differentiated in terms of supreme coercive power, governments are the refined instruments and expressions of that power. For our own age the problem, we have urged, is to guarantee for the first time in history a government which *in action* is therefore completely the organization and agent of the widest possible range of common interests—in brief, an unqualifiedly *democratic* government.

The complexity of this problem has also been glossed over by some educational theorists. They have failed to appreciate that in a world of deep-seated conflict self-government is not necessarily identifiable with some abstract government of all or for all. Indeed, any dialectical definition of "majority" implies the polar fact of a minority whose own interests, or at least whose interpretation of such interests, differ from the majority's. Hence, we need here to perceive that the final import of majority rule for our period, if not for all periods, is to express and guarantee the largest obtainable consensus upon the largest quantity and richest quality of interests among the earth's peoples at any given time—a consensus springing always from the drives of human nature, individually and socially, and producing institutional arrangements, especially of the service state and government, through which those drives may be released.

Meanwhile, minority dissent consists of two main types. There is the dissent of those who, because of some heavy stake in traditional structures, exert every effort to thwart the will of the majority. They are likely to be, in our generation, the same forces of contraction which engineer the steam-shovels of public opinion to dig the void deeper. Second, there is the minority which dissents, not so much because it disagrees with the central

* See Chapter VIII.

aims of the majority, as because it is unconvinced of a particular means to their attainment and thus may prefer an alternative means. The importance of the service performed by this second type of minority can scarcely be overstressed: so long as judgments of the majority are not sanctified as absolutes they will continue to need salutary critiques of their own fallibility.

Another aspect of almost equal importance to an adequate theory of government is that of the proper role of democratic leadership. In light of the principles considered thus far, this role is a double one. On one side, democratic leaders carry out majority-formulated policies by expertly translating these into the specifics of legislative operation, executive application, judicial interpretation, a process during which leaders aim in every possible way to maintain close communication with their constituents to whom they are at every step responsible. On the other side, leaders are equally articulators and suggesters, that is to say, "pointers" who continually help people to perceive more exactly, more generously, their own best interests. Here is a role so suitable also to the democratic teacher that he himself becomes, in this sense, a democratic leader.

VII

Fifth, a philosophy of education-as-politics should embrace an adequate theory of normative commitment.

Let us return for a moment to an earlier remark to the effect that educational theory, especially of one influential type, emphasizes methodology to such an extent as to squeeze all other considerations to minute proportions. That this, too, is a form of commitment has often been pointed out; indeed, certain of its most eloquent spokesmen are at times evangelistic in their fervent glorification of the scientific method as the be-all and end-all of democracy itself. As others, however, have also pointed out, such commitment is paradoxical. Since one of its most passionate beliefs is that we must at all cost avoid any sort of philosophy which gives itself too wholeheartedly to precise, future-oriented goals, therefore its own professed concern with

ends somehow seems to dissolve usually into some renewed formulation of scientific means.

This avoidance, though it springs from a legitimate hostility to dogmatism and indoctrination, is no longer tenable. Actually, if we view educational philosophy in the setting of the history of ideas, we find that from Plato onward the attempt to interpret an age philosophically has been, and properly, the attempt to incorporate in one sweeping panorama both the necessary means and dominant ends of that age. In this respect, if no other, we would plead for a revivification of the great tradition of philosophy—a tradition which, applied to current education, would suggest that one pressing obligation is to construct *both* a potent methodology of social transformation and grand-scale designs for the future order.

Please do not misunderstand. This is no plea for a regression to the metaphysical systems of either ancient or modern history. We are asserting, rather, that men stand today in a unique intellectual position to build a theory of cultural commitment which is in complete accord with the canons of naturalism, empiricism, and of experimental method. More exactly, the theory now needed might be named one of "defensible partiality"—partiality to crystallized ends which fuse at every point with the deepest cravings of the largest possible majority; at the same time ends steadily exposed to the bright light of maximum evidence, of continuous public inspection, of a free flow of communication. Unlike the ends of dogmatic doctrine, therefore, they are defensible in the way that outcomes of scientific investigation are defensible. Yet they are also definite and strong in the way that convictions should be definite and strong.*

In our present setting, the need then is for commitment, first of all, to the end of that kind of world order where all such creations of man's inventive genius as atomic energy are brought under completely public control. Such an end, delineated into the specifics of human experience, requires the utmost cooperation of every department of learning: of politics, certainly, but

* See Chapter X.

likewise of all the social sciences; of physics, but likewise of all the natural sciences; of education, but likewise of all great religions and arts. The service that philosophy should render here becomes comparable in our time to that of such critical periods of both danger and promise as the fifth century B.C., or the seventeenth A.D.: the paramount service of viewing and testing the ends of life as a whole, of audacious and cosmic vision.

VIII

These five buttresses have been presented as scarcely more than rough sketches. Each involves a multitude of knotty problems, of unanswered questions, demanding our combined effort and integrity. It would be unfortunate, however, to leave the impression that our professional responsibility is limited to the intellectual. Time is too precious to permit leisurely isolation from school and community laboratories of practice. We in educational philosophy, no less than those in psychology or other foundational studies, need now to establish much more active association not only with experts in curriculum, in method, in adult education, but also with experts in other fields like politics itself.

Such association should include more thorough experimentation with semantics, propaganda analysis, group dynamics, and other techniques leading in turn both to ruthless exposure and to democratic direction of the devices which now threaten to destroy the brain cells of popular mentality. It should provide literally thousands of opportunities for the practice of learning through and toward the achievement of wide consensuses, themselves the symbol of public rule of the deeper organic significance we have been trying to imply. It should encourage communication with the educational philosophers of countries beyond America, looking toward influencing such potentially important agencies of international understanding as UNESCO. It should lead to action on all community levels in order to strengthen our grasp of conflicting social forces, of the meaning of the state, of the structures and processes of government. It should stimulate cultural designing as an indispensable way of

building inductive commitment to the axiological and institutional patterns demanded by the new world which is being born.

Finally, such association should include relentless examination of the chief alternatives. One is offered by the Rubashovs of our century: because mass understanding remains below that of objective conditions, therefore rule by the few—albeit an ostensibly well-intentioned few—becomes inescapable at least until some nebulous if not receding future. The second great alternative is, of course, the tyranny of minorities concerned only with manipulating people to maintain their own entrenched power, their private gains, even if the cost is worldwide bloodshed or starvation.

The third solution is that for which we have been pleading. That difficulties in its way are mountainous is indisputable. Yet we have faith that they can still be overcome—that education, hand-in-hand with politics, can and should become the one remaining power greater than the power of the atom. To bridge the chasm, to bring public understanding to its rightful heritage of full public control, this is the primary task of reconstructed theory expressed in militant democratic practice.

PART TWO

Controversial

Issues

in

Education

eight

THE BUGABOO OF FEDERAL CONTROL

If American education is to move in the direction of a more inclusive community approach to educational needs and aims, then it should concern itself even more directly than hitherto with the most controversial social, economic, and political issues confronting our democracy. Not only should it concern itself in an academic sense; it should seek through frank debate on the part of the largest possible number to clarify and then to act vigorously according to its judgments.

One of these issues is federal aid and control of public education. According to all indications, including a public opinion poll, a large proportion of informed teachers and citizens would endorse some kind of federal educational *aid*. What we have not considered with equal care, however, is the other pole of the federal equation. We have not, that is to say, analyzed realistically the issue of federal *control*.

Even more thoughtful educational leaders often tend to separate the one sharply from the other—to regard federal aid as something virtuous, control as something intrinsically wicked. We have, it seems, tended to make "control" very much of a stereotype no more specifically meaningful to us than "collectivism" is to a typical Republican. Like him, we snap our minds shut at the sound of the word, and in doing so perform only a disservice to the cause of education.

As a matter of fact, "control" is an entirely amoral word. It implies neither the good nor the bad as such. It becomes good or bad only in the context of specific methods and purposes—in other words, according to *how* control is exercised and for *whose* purposes. Thus, as others also have pointed out, localized controls are by no means always good: if we assume that one test of desirable education is wide participation by students, teachers and parents in program-making, then great numbers of schools dominated by autocratic local boards are very bad indeed. On the other hand, it is far from established that federal directives have always been inimical to worthwhile means and goals: if we assume that another test of desirable education is the opportunity to engage in cooperative, healthful, and constructive activity, then we could find many thousands of young men glad to testify that the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's was decidedly good.

These examples may seem quite obvious. Yet they serve to open the way to a contention which, judging by our prevalent confusion and static-mindedness regarding the problem, is by no means obvious. This is the contention that the whole matter of federal control needs to be re-examined in terms of fundamental social and ethical premises. Until this is done, we as a profession will not be sufficiently settled in our minds to unite around a policy and program which can defeat the enemies of generous, free public education—enemies of whom unfortunately there are many in places of power and prestige.

II

It would be interesting, if space allowed, to contrast critically the premises of those who oppose and those who favor federal

intervention. The most we can do here is to imply what the former might be by considering the latter—that is, by considering three premises which, among others, underlie the case not only for federal aid but for control as well. These are (1) the desirability of equal educational opportunity for all citizens, regardless of race, creed, or economic status; (2) the necessity of an educated citizenry for the nation as a whole; and (3) the increasingly collective, interconnected structures of modern culture.

Now there is no doubt that some educators, in common with some citizens, would profess to accept each of these premises while emphatically denying that either federal aid or federal control of the schools is a proper conclusion from them. Actually, however, by that denial they also tacitly distrust all three premises.

To take the first, if any fact is established by our present economy, it is that educational equality is not and cannot be provided in large sections of the country—especially the South—unless the states are assisted by federal funds. Their own resources simply will not allow such equality with the richer states.

Here, of course, is the chief argument of those who now support the need for federal aid; and in doing so they certainly cannot be accused of paying mere lip-service to the first of the three premises. Yet the question arises whether even they, if and when they continue to insist that such equality should be achieved without federal control, are not still guilty of lip-service at least toward both the other premises.

For if, to consider the second premise next, it is true that an educated people is a *national* necessity—if, for example, the country *as a whole* has been weakened by the illiteracy and ignorance of *some parts* of the population—then surely it also becomes an obligation of the nation to guarantee decent standards of education to every citizen in the interests of the whole.

Yet if federal funds are simply handed over to the states and districts, what assurance is there that this kind of education will result at all? Vast amounts of money can be spent by ingenious but irresponsible public officials without any certainty whatever that the children and adults for whose benefit it is

intended will enjoy plentiful and excellent textbooks, well-trained and well-paid teachers, or up-to-date equipment. It is not impossible, under some of the bills that have been proposed, that states could manage to reduce their own expenditures and substitute federal funds so that educationally they would be very little better off than they were before. And if such subterfuges are to be prevented, so that every state unquestionably would be compelled to spend federal funds for the sole purpose of raising standards of their schools, then already federal control must obviously function in some specified degree in order to make sure all regulations are properly enforced.

Indeed, it is just because certain educators have seen that any kind of workable support must be, as it has always been, accompanied by definite controls that they have preferred what they regard as the lesser of two evils—no federal aid at all. But these educators, while possibly more consistent than some of their colleagues, are themselves likely to be caught on the horns of a dilemma. If they deny federal aid, they deny equality of educational opportunity, for they usually admit such opportunity can be assured in no other practical way; but if they approve of federal aid, then they yield to federal control, for they see clearly that to be effective any kind of aid must necessarily be so accompanied.

The resolution of the dilemma is, we suggest, to recognize frankly that those educational standards which, with our second premise, we concede are needed for the nation as a whole, can only be safeguarded by a measure of federal authority. For the fact is that even our first premise is unlikely to mean much in practice so long as poltaxers like Rankin, not to mention less notorious Congressmen, could siphon off such federal support as would come their way without sufficient supervision to make sure it was actually used for the educational improvement of *all* the common people of their areas.

The third premise, however, generates the strongest need for reconsideration of the problem of control. That our entire culture has been undergoing a breathlessly swift transition from strongly independent, decentralized traditions and practices to

new methods and institutions which are just as strongly interdependent and centralized is a fact which no one can any longer even pretend to overlook. Yet, while we now accept this fact as a matter of course in speaking of economic relations, or even of such potent educational media as the movie and radio, many of us still revert to the precious beliefs of our forefathers the moment we begin to consider public education. The sacredness of "states' rights," the horrors of "bureaucracy" and other typical shibboleths of the nineteenth century, are brought out of storage and hauled creakingly to the battlefronts of professional debate whenever the question is raised whether, just possibly, interdependence and centralization might not have some bearing on the schools as well.

And what bearing might they have? The connection of our third premise with the first and second here becomes significant. With the first, because our concern with *equality* of opportunity rather than so exclusively with the more individualistic value of *liberty* is a token of our growing regard for human *similarities* as well as *differences*—similarities of which we become more and more aware as our industrial and agricultural occupations become increasingly integrated and systematized through the power especially of technology. With the second, because the recognition that good education is a *total* necessity of our national life is itself an indication that today we are becoming much too closely knit as a people to run the risk of neglecting any considerable number of us for any length of time.

It is, of course, precisely because many of our gravest problems have become national rather than local in character that often in recent years they have been met most successfully through the instrumentality of federal legislation. The history of the New Deal disproves an old notion that decentralized controls always carry out the wishes of people more efficiently than centralized controls. When a problem like unemployment is national in scope, as it usually is in our own generation, the mutual concern of citizens to find a solution may crystallize more quickly and successfully just because it is so all-pervading. Thus we have seen on more than one recent occasion that

the voice of perhaps fifty million citizens may be considerably more insistent and harmonious than the vacillating and discordant voices of groups, communities, even of whole states.

"Democratic centralism," as it is sometimes called, expresses in a phrase the realization that there are times—and now evidently a great many times—when the similar needs of similar people may be satisfied better by centers of delegated authority responsible to the great majority than by any other means at present available.

III

We need hardly emphasize that the difficulties raised by this analysis are greater than can possibly be suggested here. If, however, we are thus far even roughly correct, then it follows that federal control of education not only will not be incompatible with American well-being in the years just ahead, but may actually enhance it much more rapidly than the types to which we are habituated by routine, ideology, and perhaps timidity.

This is not to say, certainly, that central authority subject to popular consent would always and necessarily meet the educational requirements of our interdependent nation more competently than any other kinds. Just as we oversimplify by sharply separating aid from control, so we oversimplify too by taking an "either-or" attitude toward federal and local authority.

It still remains true, for example, that a more efficient and rewarding job can and should be done on local levels than is now being done. It is true, also, that a crucial test of democracy in action is the degree to which ordinary people actively participate in its operations. But the means by which they may do so are likely to change with other changes in social evolution; and it is just because you and I often are no longer able to do so fruitfully on a merely local basis that new techniques of participation—new formulae for building two-way ladders between ourselves at the base of the democratic pyramid and our chosen leaders at its apex—are required at this juncture of our history.

IV

Here we should like to offer just two suggestions through which such ladders could be built. The first is the proposal of the John Dewey Society in its Sixth Yearbook, *Mobilizing Educational Resources*, that a "national emergency educational board" be set up representing not only the teaching profession, but businessmen, industrial workers, farmers, minority groups, and youth. The board would have several functions: to develop a grand conception of education for the American people, to translate this conception into a national program for the schools, to coordinate its program with nonschool educational agencies such as the press and with federal agencies, and to formulate a plan for federal support. Yet too often in various chapters we co-authors cringe from the painful question of how recognition of the need for nation-wide standards could become something more than "suggestive and stimulating" to localities which might prefer to ignore them entirely. The proposal does, however, break down a number of common barriers; hence it deserves more careful consideration than it has thus far received.

A second suggestion arises from the experience of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and illustrates concretely what the John Dewey Society's proposal too often does not. The TVA proves that, even in a complex society like ours, it is thoroughly practical to combine *centralized authority* and *decentralized administration* in a working synthesis. The people of the Valley participate constantly and enthusiastically at virtually every crucial point of its development; yet if strong directives were not authorized by the federal government such participation would have been quite inconceivable. Moreover, as the late Joseph K. Hart predicted in his book, *Education for an Age of Power*, before the TVA had scarcely begun, its potentialities for a new pattern of American schooling are rich. More teachers and parents should read the too little known Bulletins of the Bureau of Service, University of Kentucky, if they want to discover how thrilling education can become with federal cooperation of the type the TVA provides.

This second suggestion amounts therefore to a double one. It implies, on the one hand, that federal control of education is really bound up with the entire reconstruction of American economic and cultural life—that there is pressing need, especially, for experiments comparable to, though not identical with, the TVA in *every* region of the country, not just in one alone. But the suggestion implies, on the other hand, that even while we are working toward such social objectives in a comprehensive sense, we should carefully explore the formula of "centralized authority—decentralized administration" as an educational objective in a more specific sense. In a word, it is more than likely that, if we but insisted strongly enough, we could construct for America a dynamic "educational TVA" on a national scale.

Here is where professional and lay organizations concerned with the problem could perform a service. With need for federal assistance as much alive as ever, a conference of representatives of these organizations should be called as soon as possible for the purpose of framing a new bill and organizing a campaign for its passage into law. This conference should reconsider the provisions of bills recently proposed. Also, it should at last come to grips with the issue of federal control. For if it is true that control by desirable means and for desirable ends is, after all, integral with effective aid, then we do injustice not only to ourselves as teachers but to the American people whom we serve, when we evade the issue largely because it has become a bugaboo.

nine

ORGANIZED RELIGION AND EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITY

Two further and related questions call for answer on the issue, discussed in Chapter VIII, of federal aid and federal authority. They may be put like this: (a) "Shall parochial schools receive support, along with public schools, from any federal funds appropriated for general education?" and (b) "If federal authority is to be provided over public education, shall this not guarantee some place for religious instruction?"

The first of these questions has recently become controversial. A 5 to 4 decision by the United States Supreme Court permits (though does not compel) the use of state funds to pay for transportation of parochial as well as public school children. Also, certain bills introduced in Congress to provide federal aid to education would allow a percentage of funds to go to parochial schools. While arguments become complicated, perhaps the most familiar is that, after all, citizens of a faith like

the Roman Catholic Church pay taxes as well as do others; hence that they have a right to some return in services. Opponents reply that no one is compelled to send his children to parochial schools; that the public schools are there for them to attend if their parents wish; and that if the latter do not care to take advantage of them, they should expect to have to pay additional charges, exactly as do well-to-do parents who prefer to place their sons or daughters in private schools.

The second question as stated is not yet widely discussed—no doubt for the reason that, as we have observed, most educators have not faced the issue of federal authority and control at all. That it is bound to arise when and if the latter issue does become acute is, nevertheless, certain. Indeed, the same educators—usually of progressivist stamp—who most vigorously oppose federal aid to parochial schools are already quick to point out how easily this becomes a wedge by which Catholics, particularly, seek entrance to the offices of control over public education. Should they become eligible for federal support, they obviously are better able to exert influence as to the program for which this support shall go. Thus the traditional separation of church and state is jeopardized.

On the whole, those who subscribe to the kind of position developed in this volume would be in agreement thus far with their closest philosophic allies, the progressivists. Also with the latter, they dislike such devices as "released time" from public school hours for religious instruction. Its most conspicuous effect is to separate children of various faiths from one another, and thus to accentuate group differences at the very time when a culture-in-crisis needs so seriously to concern itself with strengthening intergroup solidarities.

II

While various progressivists are no doubt fully aware of the philosophic roots of the issue, it is symptomatic that perhaps the keenest statement of their position was written by Professor Dewey as far back as 1908, and that it is still quoted or paraphrased as though it were virtually the last word on the subject.

Certainly it has not been noticeably deepened by subsequent discussion.

His point is simple but crucial. Organized religion, as we have known it, is authoritarian; it claims a monopoly on absolute truths and values which presumably entitles it to impose these dogmas upon everyone it can reach. Such imposition is plainly antithetical to the proper function of public education because the latter is committed to no such dogmas: learning is open and experimental, not exclusive and ordained. The implication is that even to bring the teaching of religion into the schools in an "objective" fashion is hazardous; for devotees of organized religion would immediately insist that it be regarded by the teacher as they themselves regard it. Thus we should be running the risk of forming "habits of mind which are at war with the habits of mind congruous with democracy and with science." We would be wiser to do nothing than to do the wrong things, at least until education is much farther along.

The premise of this argument is, then, that a fundamental difference exists between the philosophic underpinnings of traditional religion and of public education. Mr. Dewey would be the first to agree, of course, that this difference is by no means always as actual as it ought to be ideally. For public education, too, is constrained in practice by dogmatic beliefs: not only do teachers often allow their religious beliefs to color secular studies; not only are reading of the Bible, religious music, and even sectarian exercises compulsory in many schools; but other types of authoritarianism—political and economic, especially—are rampant. Nevertheless the two kinds of philosophy remain incompatible; and it is for this key reason, even when it is concealed, that we cannot afford to encourage any kind of movement such as federal aid to parochial schools that might weaken the barrier between them.

III

We should be grateful for thus having the basic issue brought into such sharp focus. Yet it is profitable to restate and supplement the progressivist position in at least four respects.

1. Opposition to the authoritarian assumptions of traditional religion may best be indicated in terms of opposition to indoctrination. As we shall see in the next chapter, truths or values can never be built soundly by inculcating any one doctrine as so absolutely true and good that alternative doctrines are assumed in advance to be false and bad. For this reason, free public education should be extremely suspicious of any institution which would, had it the power to do so, substitute indoctrination for the kind of learning which is developed by open and public study of every kind of evidence, by the free flow of communication, and by uncoerced social consensus.

2. By the same token, however, it is necessary to oppose any program of public education which fails to give careful consideration to doctrines other than the one which happens to be preferred at a given time. For example, while the educational theory underlying this volume is itself strongly committed to certain preferences in belief, it insists upon the most scrupulous consideration of all varieties of beliefs at odds with its own—indeed, such consideration is indispensable to the whole process by which these preferences are attained. Hence it regards as a peculiarly insidious kind of indoctrination any view that we had better exclude religious doctrines from consideration by the public schools; for this becomes, all too easily, a convenient way of insisting that another doctrine—in this case, the progressivist—is so clearly synonymous with good education that we need not, or at any rate should not, expose it to the unrestricted challenge of alternatives. The extreme to which this attitude may go is exemplified in the appalling disregard or belittlement by some progressivists of other philosophies than their own in certain teachers' colleges where they are influential.

3. If public schools are to give fair consideration to the traditional, contemporary, and future significance of religion, all public school teachers need to be trained to help in the task. Thus far, of course, they have been almost wholly unequipped, and in fairness to Mr. Dewey we should observe that he is thinking of this lack of equipment in his own skeptical comments. But whereas he, and most of his followers likewise, offer too little in the way of systematic or audacious proposals for

overcoming the deficiency, we urge no further delay in tackling the study of religion. The latter is much too fundamental an aspect of both historic and present social realities to be left to casual or doctrinaire treatment *outside* the public school. For this reason it should be given a conspicuous place in the reconstructed curriculum, with contents and procedures in which teachers themselves need to be expert if it is to be studied vitally.

4. Returning now to the more immediate issue of educational authority and organized religion, its ultimate solution, surely, is to provide a world-wide system of education so potent in values which traditional religions have groped to supply (particularly, satisfaction of the want of fairly immediate meaning and direction) that it becomes its own best foil against renewed encroachments by such religions. To some extent, progressivists are on the verge of similar proposals when they talk of "a common faith," "character education," and "spiritual values"; or when they offer psychologically dubious, if not inconsistent, recommendations that we teach "about" religion but not religion itself. Their hesitancy, however, to allow organized religions any kind of thorough consideration in the schools and thus to determine what ingredients of value, if any, may be incorporated from them into the future culture; above all, their concentration upon methodology at the expense of precisely drawn cultural designs—for these and perhaps still other reasons we need to look further than they seem willing to look.

In a word, we need especially to crystallize the promise contained in the revolutionary goal of a mature and free humanity. Herein is contained the answer to those who would turn the clock of history back to ecclesiastic authority over public schools. Herein is the magnificent secret that a reconstructed education can help to unlock. Herein is the reason why, given this kind of education, we may expect the eventual assimilation of most if not all parochial schools by the school-centered community—a community no longer divided by walls of sectarian ethnocentrism, but harmonized esthetically, organically, through majority commitment to majority-defined values in all their specific institutional projections.

ten

SHALL THE SCHOOLS INDOCTRINATE?

The kind of education here being discussed encourages students, teachers, and all members of the community not merely to *study* knowledge and problems considered crucial to our period of culture, but to *make up their minds* about promising solutions, and then to act concertedly. Its emphasis on *commitment* to agreed-upon, future-looking goals thus raises once more the old problem of bias and indoctrination.

Is it not true, the critic may ask, that the teacher who believes in the purposes of national and international reconstruction, who accepts the dominant value of self-realization, who infers that the majority of people should agree with his own judgment that the present junction of forces demands the choice of a socialized democracy—is it not true that such a philosophy repudiates the ideal of academic freedom, of fairness to "all sides of all questions"?

Stated thus academically the issue is important enough. It

becomes still more important when we view it again through the lens of our cultural crisis. For then we perceive that the question is ultimately whether public education should become the dedicated ally of certain social forces and aims, or whether education should remain so far as possible neutral and impartial, true to the liberal ideal of academic freedom at its best. Will the "democratic way of life" ultimately be served by emulating in any way the fixed educational systems of certain countries? Yet if public education does not do so, can it possibly succeed in building a generation of citizens who deeply believe in their own future? Is one of liberal democracy's greatest weaknesses perhaps its very pride in open-mindedness and tolerance—with all their accompanying vacillations, uncertainties, confusions—by contrast with which millions of young citizens elsewhere in the world seem now to be acquiring an absolute social devotion, loyalty, and purposefulness which serve as bulwarks of strength to those countries?

The preceding interpretation of philosophical and educational principles, however superficially treated, should already have provided the outlines of an answer to such a challenge. This answer, in essence, is unequivocal opposition to indoctrination; and equally unequivocal support of academic freedom, in the sense of impartial and thorough study of all kinds of evidence and alternatives. At the same time, it insists that the vital utilization of these principles is entirely compatible with the development of clear social convictions and concerted action upon those convictions.

In short, our position supports that kind of "partiality" which is at the same moment "defensible." Here indeed is the ultimate test of whether learning is woven into the warp and woof of individual and group behavior—whether patterns of belief not only are professed but consistently and fully practiced. What then, more precisely, is education for "defensible partiality"?

II

Let us try to understand first what defensible partiality is *not*. Opposition to indoctrination follows from definition of that

term. In brief, it is that method of learning by communication which proceeds primarily in one direction (from the "communicator" to the "communicatee") for the purpose of inculcating in the mind and behavior of the latter a firm acceptance of some one doctrine or systematic body of beliefs—a doctrine assumed in advance by its exponents to be so supremely true, so good, or so beautiful as to justify no need for critical, scrupulous, thoroughgoing comparison with alternative doctrines.

It follows from this definition that most of the ways of learning which have been and are still practiced in the name of education amount in fact to plain indoctrination. For many centuries, the Church has deliberately and frankly inculcated its own doctrine as alone true and good, its chief indoctrinators being priests vested with authority to communicate its tenets to receptive minds. Today such education occurs wherever a society is under the sole domination of similarly unquestionable authority: Fascist Spain and Soviet Russia, however radically unlike otherwise, frankly indoctrinate the population in the supremacy of their respective systems. In the democracies, too, this kind of education flourishes oftener than not: inculcation of moral codes or social folklore, and especially of attitudes and programs identified with the traditional economic-political system, simply means that public schools, far more often than most of their personnel themselves realize, are under the heavy influence of the dominant ideology.

Indoctrination may occur, also, within the kind of education ostensibly most opposed to its practice. Not only do sincere devotees of academic freedom often fail to recognize the powerful ideological influences and irrational motivations working upon and molding both their own and their students' beliefs— influences generating all sorts of surreptitious rationalizations and weighted interpretations of evidence. Also, it is not difficult to point to institutions of teacher-training where the experimental-liberal viewpoint so controls the curriculum as almost totally to ignore careful, scholarly consideration of alternative viewpoints. The ironic one-sidedness of the kind of progressivist who thus considers himself the sole guardian of the "true" philosophy is perhaps matched only by the kind of positivist

who smugly believes he is "true" solely to the purified canons of scientific objectivity.

III

The advocate of defensible partiality is, of course, far from immune to ideological and other socio-psychological forces. Nor does he seek to purge them entirely: this he thinks is impossible in any case; they are too substantial a part of all human experience. What he does aim at is to bring them under maximum democratic control, including or excluding them according to their compatibility or incompatibility with the emerging purposes and programs of the majority. Such control is possible, however, only to the extent that these forces are first analyzed and appraised by the public processes of shared experience of which he is himself part.

We must also frankly recognize that aspects of indoctrination, as defined, may be more closely approximated at some stages of education than at other stages. In the earliest years, children must absorb some facts and rules by a degree of inculcation in order to get along with any group. In high school and college, too, inculcation of evidence (the laws of natural science, for instance) or of communication (skill in writing, for instance) may also be needed temporarily. This should by no means suggest, however, that indoctrination is after all conceded: education *as a whole* is the proper frame of reference, not any part taken out of context. A school permeated with the reconstructionist philosophy will always accordingly avoid mere inculcation: whenever and wherever people learn, they should increasingly appreciate both by precept and practice that every fact, rule, or skill they acquire should eventually be judged, accepted, or rejected by themselves according to whether it contributes to their cooperatively agreed-upon values and correlative cultural designs. The rudiments of this crucial attitude can and should begin to develop in the nursery school itself.

IV

The present theory also distinguishes between indoctrination and propaganda. The latter is defined as a "short-cut" device

for influencing attitudes and consequent conduct: it attempts through colorful symbolization rich with suggestion (e.g., advertising displays, music, rhetoric) to persuade some individual or group directly and forcibly that a certain belief, practice, product, is either desirable or undesirable. Many of the meticulous arguments and much of the specific evidence that *could* be mustered are therefore deliberately omitted from effective propaganda. In this respect, although it may be a potent aid to indoctrination and shade imperceptibly into the latter, it differs in the sense that indoctrination at its best includes all possible argument and evidence at least of a sort favorable to its own or unfavorable to any contrasting doctrine. Systematic indoctrination of perennialism, for example, becomes an extremely complicated philosophic enterprise; while propaganda for perennialism is best effected through rituals and dogmas of the Church.

But propaganda is indispensable under certain conditions to other types of teaching than indoctrination. Whatever his philosophy, no instructor can avoid the need at times of taking short-cuts by omission of some of the possible evidence, some of the possible ways of communication, which would enter into a given learning situation were it to be treated as exhaustively as possible. Moreover, propaganda often reinforces a fact, problem, or value upon students much more effectively than would a coldly, neutrally analytical approach. There is no reason why learning for worthwhile ends should not be warmed with the persuasive qualities which advertisers so often exploit for deleterious ends. Much more forthrightly, however, than other philosophies (with the possible exception of perennialism), the philosophy here advocated believes that if education is to be a great cultural force in shaping of attitudes and inciting to actions it should become colorful and dramatic in the way that propaganda can be colorful and dramatic.

Let it be clearly understood that this "heresy" does not imply that propaganda and education are therefore synonymous. Education in its totality encompasses the fullest possible consideration of evidence, the most thorough effort at clear com-

munication, and the most scrupulous respect for disagreements as well as agreements. Hence propaganda should be judged by the extent to which it is helpful while always *subordinate* to the complete process and product of democratic learning—hence also by the extent to which both students and teachers realize how and when its methods are being utilized in the school. The teacher's duty here includes two chief responsibilities: (a) to label propaganda for what it is, meanwhile giving students practice in its detection and techniques; and (b) to develop even in very young students unforgettable appreciation of the fact that they often learn rules, attitudes, beliefs, by short-cuts which, while necessary at certain times, are nevertheless deserving of additional investigation, elaboration, and experience at other times. Only thus is propaganda transformed into education proper. Only thus is a rule of health that is learned by the child genuinely relearned and incorporated into the life of the adult.

The more successfully this habit of continuous criticism and active revaluation develops in children, the less likely are they to be victimized by mere propaganda at any time. The less likely are they dualistically to separate education and propaganda in actual practice. The less likely, too, are either children or adults naively to assume that all propaganda, being "bad," should as far as possible be obliterated—an assumption not only illegitimate but thoroughly impractical either in schools or in the larger society.

V

It appears, then, that the viewpoint we are taking is much more sympathetic to the uses of propaganda than to indoctrination. Our opposition to the latter is fundamental for it assumes, not only that ultimate truths and values are possessed in advance by their exponent, but that neither the sometimes cumbersome and tedious process of exposure to comparative examination, nor the open construction of majority agreement, is essential to their own proven superiority. Hence by its very nature indoctrination is in sharp contrast with a philosophy of learning

which holds, on the contrary, that men should build positive convictions only by public inspection of and testimony about all pertinent and available evidence, and by exhaustive consideration of alternative convictions.

Now propaganda, when it is utilized to support presumably unchallengeable, absolute doctrines, is quite as indefensible as indoctrination. At least however in certain forms, propaganda as defined is perfectly consistent also with learning in our preferred sense. In other words, as a subsidiary technique strictly governed by the principles of that theory of learning, there is no reason why the techniques and fruits of propaganda should not frequently be subjected to thoroughgoing educational analysis and interpretation; indeed, we should make sure that they are. Thus if a colorful poster urges people to support consumer cooperatives, the plea as such may lack logic and data; it may seek to mold attitudes by direct suggestion alone; yet it may upon careful study prove wholly consistent with such logic and data.

It follows that at least one common type of propaganda, familiarly called "card-stacking"—the weighting or otherwise distorting of evidence—is under no circumstances acceptable. (Indeed, another reason for our opposition to indoctrination is that, although more elaborately, it too stacks the cards by distorting, disregarding, or underplaying antithetical views.) But propaganda which resorts merely to such devices as "name-calling" or "glittering generalities" is quite possibly opposing situations which upon exposure to evidence, communication, and agreement, fully deserve the epithet or the pleasant-sounding label, as the case may be.

VI

A richer meaning of defensible partiality should now emerge. *What we learn is defensible simply insofar as the ends we support and the means we utilize are able to stand up against exposure to open, unrestricted criticism and comparison. What we learn is partial insofar as these ends and means still remain definite and positive to their majority advocates after the*

defense occurs. If at any moment we stubbornly disregard the impact of such criticism and comparison we thereby fail to follow our own rules. We allow dogmatism or impatience to overcome our intention to accept only those truths, values, and programs reached, to the highest degree possible, according to such an inductive and cooperative procedure as was exemplified in Chapter V. We begin to substitute indoctrination, and in all likelihood card-stacking propaganda, for learning as majority agreement.

The inference is that public education, like the culture itself, can arrive at commitments worth fighting for only as these are hammered out of the deepest and widest personal and group experience available. To put it differently, partiality paradoxically increases in defensibility only as it is tested by the kind of impartiality provided through many-sided evidence, unrestricted communication, complete respect for criticism and minority dissent.

The teacher of our persuasion, being an important part of this community of learning, is in the long run subject to the same principles as any other member. Hence his classroom provides continuous opportunity for impartiality in study just because he and his students cannot otherwise effectively obtain majority agreements which are themselves partial. As these agreements are reached they are often put into effect in the form of policies and activities to which minorities then also submit.

It should be recognized, however, that such a teacher as we endorse already holds commitments which, unless he is sensitive to the full import of his own philosophy, may lead to an indefensible if unconscious indoctrination. To avoid this effect, it is necessary for him to distinguish between his own pattern of beliefs and those beliefs still developing among his students. It is likewise necessary that, at some point in every course of study, he be as explicit as possible both to himself and to them as to where he himself stands. By exploring and delineating the complex forces which have contributed to his own outlook; by trying to sift out his own *prejudices* (opinions and attitudes hastily, illogically, merely emotionally shaped) from his *con-*

victions (opinions and attitudes carefully, logically, consciously shaped); by repeatedly warning his students that even his clearest convictions are likely to be touched with prejudice, as indicated possibly by the fact that they are disputed among other teachers—by these and other means, students can develop the habit of critical awareness of his own point of view. Further, as this kind of teacher encourages them to take issue with him whenever they choose to do so (to present counter-evidence and alternative proposals, for example, or to challenge his clarity of language), he avoids those iniquities of pontifical superimposition which are still the rule rather than exception in public education. In these respects, he becomes more than a teacher: he becomes a democratic *leader* and *expert* in the precise sense of these terms.

We may recapitulate the concept of defensible partiality by recalling what Professor Bruce Raup and his associates* mean by the "community of persuasion." Both concepts would emphasize the imperative of maximum cooperative and communicative effort to arrive at the strongest possible consensus. Both would oppose intimidation, fear, distortion, timidity, or mere compromise. Both would emphasize the continuity between schools and communities, viewing the former as foci of the latter.

If these chapters more strongly emphasize and specify the purposeful product as well as the process of democratic consensus needed for our time, if they also insist upon more realistic awareness of the coercive social forces which prevent uncoercive methods from now functioning effectively, such differences are still perhaps oftener of degree than of kind. The school-community of uncoerced persuasion is in large respects richly premonitory of the meaning of education for defensible partiality.

* See *Improvement of Practical Intelligence* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950).

eleven

THE TEACHER AND ORGANIZED LABOR

I

We have been saying so repeatedly that "we must educate for democracy" that many of us no longer respond except with polite boredom. Actually, however, the trouble is not that this demand is less legitimate than formerly. Not only is it legitimate, it is absolutely imperative.

The trouble is that we use the term so loosely, tritely, that it means anything to anybody, and thus much to nobody. Before we can expect it to stir us profoundly either in defense of the democratic elements which already exist, or in achievement of the democratic ideals which might but do not yet exist, we must strip democracy of the vague and sometimes insidious phrases which so often disguise the motives of men who use them. We must, further, define it according to principles which are so unequivocal and unneutral as to indicate with complete surety, not only those among us who can be loyal to them, but also those

who, when so tested, cannot accept democracy in any genuine sense because too threatening to their own ulterior interests. These, without doubt, are in the minority. For *democracy is that form of society in which all physical and spiritual resources of life are in fact available to and under the control of the majority of people; and in which the minority is always free to criticize while obedient to policies authorized by the majority.*

If this definition, too, seems at first innocent and empty, perhaps it will seem so no longer when examined in the light of democracy's career. For, during its three or four centuries of modern life, democracy has been above all the political instrument by which a new type of dynamic economy based on the acquisition of private property through free competition could develop with minimum of restriction and maximum of authority. We cannot indicate even cursorily why this original purpose, conceived for the benefit of an actual minority engaged in the new enterprise, was gradually supplemented by purposes which democracy's founders in Europe never intended. Especially in America where no other form of government preceded, the principles of freedom and equality have developed extraordinary potency—a potency unsatisfied by assurances that the minority still remain free to accumulate vast corporate wealth, while the majority of families subsist on incomes barely adequate for the bare necessities of life; or by other assurances that equality operates in the political sense, while at the same time circumscribed by serious inequalities of opportunity in every other sense. Unless, in other words, democracy is simply a shibboleth to confuse what we intend with what we profess, it means freedom for the majority to share in the abundance which earth and machine stand ready to yield; and it means, also, equal right to all fruits of this abundance, rewarded in full according to the unequal abilities of individuals to produce them.

Now the working people of America as well as of other countries constitute a large proportion of the majority to which we refer. This does not, of course, mean that they are solely of one category. Farmers, for example, are like working people in the respect that they earn through their own labor, yet different

from them in that often they are, at least in name, the owners of their place of occupation. In any case, as American workers have become conscious of their tremendous part in creating the abundance of the nation, some fifteen millions of them with dependents totaling at least thirty millions more have joined together so that they might, through the sheer power of their unity, equate in degree the power of the minority who hold title to our essential resources. The history of organized labor is a dramatic one. Every step of the way toward realization of majority-democracy has required courage, patience, sacrifice; and in the struggle violence, generated no doubt from various sides, has not been uncommon. But the dark side of the story is brightened by knowledge that organized labor at last is accepted as a legal agency of democratic practice. More than any other group, organized labor takes seriously the powerful words of Abraham Lincoln: "it has so happened, in all ages of the world, that some have labored, and others have without labor enjoyed a large proportion of the fruits. This is wrong and should not continue. To secure to each laborer the whole product of his labor, or as nearly as possible, is a worthy object of any good government."

Yet those classes supposedly most qualified to understand the evolution of the democratic conception have been slowest to apply it to their own situation. While the relatively untutored workers of various manual skills were slowly developing consciousness of their rights and of methods by which to fulfill them, others, such as clerks, musicians, reporters, and teachers, whose labor required primarily mental rather than manual skills, were content to live largely in insecurity and inequality as reward for the luxury of viewing themselves aligned, at least prospectively, with privileged strata of the population. Gradually, to be sure, some of these groups, such as reporters, have awakened to a more realistic outlook; but teachers have been unusually loath to do so. For, even when some are no longer entranced by the spectacle of their own elevated status, they are often consoled by the assurance that it might be worse.

We may appreciate the benefits of our democratic heritage, however, without inferring that today it is wholly valid or satis-

factory. On the contrary, our heritage must be dynamic, sensitive to the needs of an evolving society, if it is to become something more than a body of dubious folklore. Let us, for example, be grateful for the contributions of historic individualism to American culture, yet critical about its shortcomings when measured by our potential capacities under a more cooperatively organized democracy. The values of education based upon higher economic, intellectual, and social standards are unquestionably enormous in comparison with standards now prevailing.

And so, from one point of view, we are justified in asserting that teachers as a profession have too long been guided by another point of view. One consequence is that they are paid on the average shockingly low salaries. For the most part, their security is subject to the caprice of lay officials. They are constantly intimidated in the exercise of free minds and independent lives by the prejudiced interests of those who so frequently dominate community and school policies.

Surely, then, the relatively poor quality of public education is by no means due to any inherent inferiority of average teachers. It is due very much more to the state of political, economic, and intellectual servility to which they must submit so long as they have not learned the lesson which other types of workers learned much earlier—that they should, out of loyalty both to themselves and to social well-being, align themselves solidly with whatever movements are striving to achieve more genuine democracy. Today increasing thousands of them are recognizing at last that one such movement, though not the only one, is the vast organization of all those who sustain and enrich American life through their physical and mental labor.

Yet, to recognize certain interests in common with this majority is by no means to say that the teaching profession is in every respect identical with it. No doubt some enthusiasts are inclined toward such a view, but if so they are misled. The teacher belongs to a profession which has its special tasks to perform; the difficulty has been that under unsatisfactory conditions of service he has not performed them well. In order to perform them well, he must first establish conditions which will enable

him to serve efficiently and happily. This means that he legitimately requires economic rewards proportional to training, ability, needs, services—in a word, proportional to the immense value of his contribution. This means, also, that he must constantly struggle against racial and other restrictions in educational opportunity; for, after all, education exists for the people of America rather than for him. This means, finally, protection from unreasonable coercion so that he may seek and teach about society and science as these must be taught if one of the keys to democracy—freedom of speech and thought—is something more than a phrase. For, more than any other of his functions, *it is the exercise of intellectual and moral integrity which constitutes the most precious and important of the teacher's functions.*

II

Just as democracy has not in fact always meant society by and for the many, however, so it has not always meant the privilege of such exercise. The purposes of education have been open to different interpretations, one of which is the preservation of habits and values essential to traditional democracy. If this is the purpose of education then, of course, the main duty of teachers is to form in young citizens such utter acceptance of this conception as will only reinforce their complacency toward it—a purpose distinctive enough, surely; but not the one which teachers will hold if they believe that the majority of our people, once given opportunity to do so, are essentially able to direct their own destiny.

This assumption demands, above all, the development not of passive but of critical attitudes and habits of mind which are capable of distinguishing the meaning of fundamental social issues; of detecting the devices of the propagandist; of facing facts from all possible sources; and, out of unrestricted analysis rather than merely inherited beliefs, forming judgments and taking action eventuating in correction of whatever faults such analysis reveals. The affiliation of teachers with organized labor, especially in this period of tension and transition, is for two

major reasons an important guarantee that they will be able to practice this kind of education.

First, the sheer strength of organization is a bulwark against discrimination. Although teachers—particularly organized teachers—have already made progress in helping to liberalize schools and colleges so that administrators, teachers, and students may work and learn together, we have little doubt that many, though not all, educational institutions are run with complete autocracy. Such a situation is tragic enough, surely, considering that schools are supposed to be teaching democracy by example. Yet, even before widespread democratization is accomplished, the influence of organization in reducing the number of unfair dismissals and other arbitrary decisions is still important; the knowledge that such dismissals would arouse open controversy over the issues involved serves as a brake upon autocratic administrators when they are unsure of their ground. And to this negative but powerful resource may be added the positive one which organizations possess in their right to expose the facts of a case so that, if evidence of unfairness appears, the public may demand a hearing and reinstatement; or, at least, so that good teachers will refuse, as they occasionally do now, to join certain faculties because of a notorious reputation for undemocratic policy.

In situations like these, to be sure, associations of teachers may and at times do exert great influence independent of labor affiliation. The point in favor of the latter is that its strength is augmented by the very fact of its unity with vast numbers of organized workers committed to one another's support; and by the correlative fact that trade unions are composed of citizens who, because their children constitute often a large proportion of school populations, may be greatly concerned with educational policy in a given community.

This leads to a second reason for believing that affiliation with organized labor improves the unique function of education—the exercise of intellectual and moral integrity. Our first reason also embraces situations, of course, where such exercise is indirectly involved: e.g., discriminations for reasons such as race,

sex, marriage, or false economy. Here, however, the point again is focused directly upon what we have called that unique function. If critical intelligence is essential to the successful operation of modern democracy, then education has the responsibility of acquainting people with facts about and interpretations of the social order which reveal fully and frankly not merely its strengths but its weaknesses as well—facts, for example, about the low standard of living, persecution of minorities, denial of civil liberties, the widespread use of labor spies, and about thousands of other situations which today are treated casually if they are not wholly excluded from the classroom. Above all, young citizens should be led to examine the reasons for the chasm separating democracy as it *might become* from democracy as it *is*; and to thoughtful, solid consideration of *every* important program for bridging that chasm.

Now, the point here is that organized labor, probably more than any other section of our population, persistently encounters facts of these kinds; yet, it suffers acutely from their suppression or distortion. Thus, it is in labor's own interests that education concern itself, not exclusively, of course, but to a much larger extent than hitherto, with issues of a controversial character. It is in labor's interests to oppose severe retrenchments advocated by powerful minorities which regard universal free education no longer as an ally but as an enemy. It is in labor's interests to protect teachers in their right to examine every social problem relentlessly, thoroughly, because today these are very often the crucial problems of labor itself.

Of course, organized labor is not always ready to support this kind of education. Sometimes its own factionalism mitigates against fair analysis of such questions as craft versus industrial unionism. Again, it is frequently victimized by name-calling devices like "communist" which reaction always wields against teachers of courage and honesty. But this only means that one of the most important services which education could perform today is to increase intelligent sensitivity and democratic outlook in the ranks of labor itself. Organized teachers should by no means think they have much to gain from the support of

trade unions and nothing to give in return. On the contrary, no greater need exists today in the whole field of public education than for the supplementation of training in manual skills by forthright study of and practice in dealing with economic, political, social problems of direct concern to future workers when they enter adult life.

III

In this discussion of educational freedom, a common objection against the kind of association urged is that it means taking a point of view, and thus of studying modern life from a biased perspective which in turn leads easily to prejudiced teaching and insidious indoctrination.* Some critics urge that the teacher should seek strict "impartiality" of the kind typified by laboratory scientists.

This argument is a serious one. Certainly, some teachers with a labor orientation use their positions unfairly, just as some teachers with a different orientation do likewise. The answer which can be made, however, may be summarized at the outset in one proposition. It is that *the possibility of genuine rather than counterfeit impartiality is more likely to be obtained, at least in the period through which we are now passing, by frank awareness of the fact that every teacher, however scientific, is subject to inescapable partiality.* This proposition may be considered under three points.

First, although a major function of education is assumed to be, even by conservatives, the development of critical intelligence in the population, we need only glance at the status of public education to see how far the ideal falls short of actuality. A large proportion of our schools requires the teaching of traditionally patriotic, uncritical, and inaccurate studies of American history, of *laissez-faire* individualism, and a glorification of values associated with the status quo. Moreover, our colleges often train teachers incapable of teaching any other way. There is not impartiality now. On the contrary, there is wholesale

* This section should thus be regarded as a restatement and elaboration, in a particular context, of the preceding chapter.

indoctrination in behalf of an obsolete eighteenth-century political philosophy, and of the still powerful institutions which it helped to establish. Thus, out of fairness to anything like a balance of knowledge in our current educational programs, we have great need for emphasis upon other kinds of evidence—evidence which, we have seen, is more than likely to be welcomed by organized labor because pertinent to its own struggles and its own conception of democratic rights. Both in teaching and scholarship, impartiality itself demands such emphasis today.

A corollary of this point is that if present education tends to be weighted, as it does, on the side of traditional social patterns, then even those who profess to practice strict impartiality are in a paradoxical sense supporting this tendency. For, they are doing nothing positively to diminish the one-sided education which now predominates, and in doing nothing positive they are simply making it easier negatively for such education to continue. Too often, ostensible impartiality is a convenient rationalization for timidity, indifference, or bias. But even when it is sincere, there are times when inaction is covert aid to reaction. Such a time exists now in the United States.

Our second point goes further by asking whether impartiality, unless carefully redefined, is even possible. While our first point recognized obstacles in the way of impartiality, it did not necessarily reject the possibility of overcoming them. Now, however, we need to examine the theory that the teacher or scholar can ever immunize himself from the influence of his environment, that he can ever dwell in the realm of pure "truth" uncontaminated by internal or external conditions. Such a theory was perhaps excusable in Plato's time: little was known then about social psychology, anthropology, biology, endocrinology, or other sciences concerned with the behavior of individuals and groups. But those who are willing to consider the evidence of science are entitled to take the alternative position that men's minds are themselves evolutionary organs, that no kind of human activity is understandable apart from the whole intricate

context in which it functions. In short, to those who accept such a position, intellectual neutrality is self-deception, and the first step toward something like genuine neutrality is catharsis of this self-deception by full awareness of economic, emotional, and other forces which mold whatever outlooks we inevitably own. Today then—however painful the experience of shattering its delusions of invidious status—the teaching profession begins to perceive that it, too, is by no means independent of these forces; that it is in a real sense, for example, aligned with other classes which make their livings from wages and salaries; and that it is, in fact, associated both in status and interest with the majority—not the minority—of the American people.

But if the teacher agrees thus far about himself and his colleagues, he is in a better position, also, to understand the attitudes and practices of groups other than his own. He will understand that school boards, composed so often of the economically "successful," may be sincere in professing their devotion to academic freedom—yet, that their sincerity is so circumscribed by their own status of power as to thwart any who dare critically to dissent from the righteousness of that power.

This sort of knowledge develops, then, from honest consideration by teachers and students together of many sides of all essential questions. Yet, it arises from initial awareness that we are all partial in our perceptions, conceptions, and values; and that, by recognizing this fact both in ourselves and in those with essentially different perspectives, we henceforth allow for these factors of influence and thus achieve more dependable judgments than ever before. Then, and then only, are we in a position to seek balanced syntheses which, by embracing total situations, supersede the typical judgments, not only of the ignorantly prejudiced, but the naively impartial as well.

A third point carries further the reasoning just advanced. In speaking of such syntheses, we do not mean that they transcend every point of view; this would hardly be consistent with the contention that partiality is inescapable. We do mean the kind of position which the scientist seeks experimentally when he

develops a theory or hypothesis which he thinks will explain what interests him. It is a position based, to be sure, upon thorough analysis of the evidence, deliberately and impartially subjected to the rigors of alternative explanations favored by students or fellow scientists. But so long as he believes that it is superior to other explanations, so long therefore as he holds it against these others, he is no longer neutral.

And this is essentially what the intelligent teacher may do when, after consideration, he regards the conception of majority-democracy the most promising way of life he can discover; and who supports organized labor because in his judgment it tries—however awkwardly—to make this conception more real. Few teachers, perhaps, consider the question in just this way. Certainly in their organizations, as in all organizations of vitality, narrow policies or internal dissensions sometimes injure their basic principles. But the teacher who is intrigued by the strength and promise of these principles may urge labor affiliation precisely because he sees that their imperfect operation, far from justifying non-participation, is an excellent reason for striving enthusiastically to establish conditions where they can be tried more perfectly. In other words, he may support organized labor actively, directly, just for the reason that he respects scientific method in its broadest, richest sense.

That the evidence for any great social hypothesis is more difficult to weigh than, for instance, a chemist's evidence, may be true. No one should deny, furthermore, that the values involved in the democratic program, while to a considerable extent subject to scientific analysis, are ultimately chosen or rejected because they seem to us intrinsically better or worse than alternative values. But that an hypothesis is cumbersome or complex, or that our preference for it is conditioned by interest, is no adequate reason to exclude it from scientific consideration. To do so, we should have to exclude much, especially from social science, which is in degree similarly limited.

If the analogy between natural and social science has any validity whatever; if the teacher duly decides that the evidence favors a democratic pattern built upon, yet essentially different

from, the original; if he further sees in organized labor one vital movement in behalf of that pattern—if he sees these things then, again, he acts as the scientist acts, when he vigorously participates in the analysis, interpretation, and verification of the viewpoint to which he is frankly partial.

twelve

COMMUNISM AND THE AMERICAN TEACHER

I

The proposal in our preceding chapter that teachers affiliate with labor brings us directly to one of the central issues before public education in our generation—or rather, quite possibly, the single most explosive and complex issue confronting the entire world in the precarious aftermath of World War II. It is therefore also an issue which teachers must face as and if they decide to help implement the first principle of effective organization—namely, the principle of vigorous association with a united, purposeful, labor movement. To put the question immediately: Is this kind of movement possible as long as the Soviet Union controls the lives of so many millions of working people—as long, moreover, as its influence reaches through its Parties almost everywhere into both the Eastern and the Western Hemispheres?

In complete frankness, it should be admitted that the

philosophy of education to which this book is a preface is less crystallized on the communist issue as yet than upon many others. Here we find sharp differences of judgment among thinkers who, elsewhere, would be largely in agreement. There are several reasons for such differences. One, the fact that Marxism, though the official doctrine of the Soviet Union, is itself a controversial philosophic theory. Two, the fact that observers of Russian life present often quite contradictory interpretations of what they observe. Three, the variables of contemporary history—especially the fact that we cannot be certain whether the course of international events will drive the Soviet Union and other great nations, including the United States, farther apart; or whether such events will bring them once more close together in some kind of common front.

The heart of the difficulty in philosophic terms (and these are the main terms, after all, through which we are obligated to approach it) is that Marxism, whether in theory or in current practice is decidedly *not* an "either-or" philosophy. That is to say, it is *neither* completely a proponent of the kind of beliefs we have considered in this volume as necessary to the rehabilitation of culture; *nor* is it completely their opponent. Dozens of illustrations might be chosen to document this generalization: we can merely note, on the negative side, Marxism's repudiation of our key belief in full minority criticism of all majority consensuses; on the positive side, its goal of a social industrial order controlled by the people in their own interests; on the negative side, its frank endorsement of methods of indoctrination both in schools and the community; on the positive side, its keen appreciation of, for example, irrational factors and economic ideologies—characteristics of learning through which students are much more likely to fasten upon basic truths about social reality than are students who learn exclusively by *typical* methods of nonindoctrination.

Yet, despite the complexities which these deep-cutting distinctions signify, it is possible to suggest the main direction along which agreement should be sought among educators. Let us try to do so in a series of steps, utilizing various prin-

ples common to our philosophy, but gearing these to the immediate issue of communism and labor affiliation.

II

Democratic learning, which we have considered to some extent in preceding pages, fails to operate just so far as it denies opportunity for the presentation or communication of any fact, idea, attitude, proposal, criticism, hypothesis, belief. For this reason alone, organized teachers should look with grave misgivings upon any attempt whatever to deprive communists or friends of the Soviet Union not only of the right to speak their convictions freely, but of the right to affiliate openly with unions or any other publicly authorized organizations.

That communists themselves, under dictatorship, deprive others of the same right is indisputable; but this is far from a good reason for retaliation in kind. Rather, teachers should join with other trade unionists and political groups in every possible effort to expose the communist's beliefs and tactics to the same clear, public light of critical judgment that he demands of contrary beliefs and tactics. That such exposure is sometimes difficult is obvious, for the communist argues that he may be compelled to work "underground." That it can be done, however, has already been demonstrated on occasion, especially by those who are well informed as to the *meaning* of communist theory and practice—one reason, incidentally, why the study of communism by public education is so imperative.

But teachers should also exercise their obligations by calling equally persistent attention to the dishonesty with which ideologists and imitation "liberals" so often utilize communist terminology for the purpose of creating confusion about or hostility to all sorts of ideas and plans toward which they themselves are hostile. The flagrant misuse of "red" labels should be exposed on every possible occasion—just as the use of "communist" should exclusively and properly denote a believer in the full philosophy of Marxism, or a supporter of the full policy and program of the Soviet Union, or both.

III

The truism that communism is the refuge of desperate and frustrated people contains just enough truth so that, in all probability, the movement will continue to spread as to both numbers and influence in rough ratio to the ruthlessness with which ordinary citizens are denied satisfaction of their fundamental wants. This is only to say that the forces of reaction and contraction, as or if they gain further oppressive power, are almost sure to generate kinds of opposition which are themselves likely to be retaliatory and extreme: hatred for hatred, denial for denial, violence for violence.

The significance of this contention for the teacher is great. It means that when he supports the forces of reaction, or when he remains merely indifferent to their ceaseless, adroit maneuvering to reinforce their bulwarks, he is at the same moment contributing his share not only to their own strength but to the strength—present or future—of their bitterest enemy. A foreign policy aimed to discourage or suppress organized movements of the working people in Europe or China; a Congress dominated by blocs whose chief business it is to aid and abet corporate business through higher tariffs and prices, through weaker consumer cooperatives and trade unions, through lower taxes on substantial incomes, through feeble civil rights—these are examples of the kind of support which, inadvertently or not, plays directly into the hands of communism itself.

Thus a vicious circle is at once established and accelerated. Extremes of callous and calculating power by the dominant minority produce their opposite extremes; but as the latter then in turn grow rapidly in strength they induce the former to attempt still more extremes.

This vicious circle, moreover, permeates all institutions, not merely the economic or political. One of its first victims is education itself. Evidence is hidden, ignored, colored; communication is rigorously canalized; agreements are coerced. The teacher is himself sacrificed to that kind of authority; indeed, he is no longer a genuine *teacher*.

IV

This kind of social polarity has already crystallized to the stage where we can no more ignore the strength of communism than we can ignore that of its arch-enemy. The immediate corollary of this fact is that the practicality of a labor movement completely united with its communist sections either in America or on an international level is unlikely, and certainly undesirable, so long as communist dictatorship continues within the borders of the Soviet Union—so long, also, as Communist Parties outside those borders accept its final direction of their own activities.

We say "unlikely" because the more informed that working people prove to be (and no inconsiderable section is even now becoming fairly well informed), the less willingly will it, for example, relinquish maximum *participation* in policy formulation. Yet this is precisely the kind of value which, be it noted, is relinquished under any system where official Party membership is not only limited to a small percentage of the total population, but in which that Party is the final arbiter of policy.

And we say "undesirable" because such limited or denied participation seriously stunts and distorts the complete process and product of democratic truth-seeking and policy-making.

Hence we are compelled to infer that, by a unified labor movement, we can only now mean *unified by the majority*—by the working people of all the countries of the world who still have opportunity to join together on a genuinely democratic platform of social reconstruction. This includes many millions in western Europe, in the Scandinavian countries, and in the entire British Commonwealth. It still includes large sections of Asia and South America. And it includes the working people of North America from Mexico to Canada.

V

What, then, of the Soviet Union and its satellites? If the majority of nations, under the leadership of labor, moves toward the kind of goals now essential to world democracy, the strength

they acquire will be so enormous that communism will at best remain the movement of a minority.

Let us restate the point in positive terms. If enough working people can learn in time how and why to win unqualified majority direction over the resources of earth and industry, of art, science, and education; if, also, they can learn how and why to participate equitably in establishing cooperative plans and institutions for the optimum utilization of these resources—then they need not and will not resort to the desperate and dictatorial means which communism advocates. The working people need not submit to a scheme of political control which brooks no frank, open criticism from the opposition. They need not yield to the easy temptation to sacrifice or qualify the hard-won ideal of majority rule in the richest sense of that precious democratic principle. They need not reach the conclusion that, because the irrational aspects of struggles between classes are indisputably powerful, therefore we may as well lose virtually all expectation of resolving the conflicts of our generation by fully public, uncensored, democratic but powerful means. By the same token, they need not yield to a doctrine of historic inevitability which virtually assumes *in advance* the imperative of grand-scale violence—violence motivated too often by passions like hatred or contempt alone, by such principles of learning as deliberate indoctrination, by a philosophy no less absolutist in certain of its characteristics than philosophies (like perennialism) which it presumes to detest.

Some authorities, moreover, expect that this kind of strength must profoundly affect the policies and practices of any remaining communist minority. Indeed, only a world government *with* this kind of strength can insist, and support its insistence with enforceable authority, that countries still dominated by Communist Parties hold free elections, *including* the Soviet Union itself.

Whether the Soviet Union would resist such majority rule is one of the variables which only the actual experience of time can test. That its own elite of the Communist Party—now apparently so solidly entrenched—is no longer interested in a

genuine world democracy is, of course, a contention of every hostile critic. Also, the trend toward a Soviet policy of nationalism, which seems to deny students and other citizens free access to developments elsewhere in the world, is a serious obstacle. If, however, "ideas are weapons," then on the hopeful side is the indisputable fact that every Soviet youth, while taught to love his Russian "Motherland," is still growing up to believe also that dictatorship is but a means to a higher end. He is still learning that a classless, international democracy is the grand culmination of the Marxian dialectic of history. Hence, were the majority of working people elsewhere to demonstrate that at last they are in indisputable control, and were they able to penetrate the "iron curtain" of official indoctrination within the Soviet Union (a difficult but not impossible task), they would at the same moment undermine a central argument of the Party for continued dictatorship—the argument that the country has been surrounded by a governing capitalist minority which blocks its progress toward complete democracy by constant threat of war or even by actual invasion. They would be helping to win as friends those who, under the influence of Marxism itself, are already committed to the objective of a libertarian, equalitarian order of earthwide scope, of abundance, and peace. They would enhance the likelihood that, while minority opposition always remains a desirable function of such an order, it needs to become an opposition of criticism and persuasion, not of violent refusal to abide by policies and decisions of the world's majority.

VI

The steps just taken toward a general policy on communism all apply to teachers in their own immediate organizational tasks. A recapitulation of these steps affords opportunity, however, to include several additional and highly relevant factors.

Teachers should not exclude communists from their organizations as long as the Communist Party is legal. But because the communist adeptly follows a particular Party "line," so that a small minority often thereby manages to control a large organi-

zation, they should be ever alert to communist tactics and aims. They should expose the latter on every possible occasion to open examination, and they should make certain that every agreement of the membership is a genuine consensus of the largest possible *majority*. What this means, in essence, is that only a skillful vigilance comparable to but contrasted with that of communists themselves is sufficient to guarantee that their sphere of influence equals their actual status in numbers and beliefs.

Teachers' unions, moreover, should like other unions become politically conscious and politically active. To limit themselves mainly to such economic problems as salary and tenure is to practice mere "craft" unionism—and thus to perpetuate the weakness of assuming that each craft of workers (glassblowers, say) is sufficient unto itself alone, and need concern itself but incidentally either with other unions or with problems of the nation or world as a whole. More than this, teachers should become sensitive to the meanings behind the general campaign promises of political candidates on issues like foreign policy, or on public ownership of monopoly enterprise. The main purpose of such political action is the supreme one of reconstructing the culture. But it is also in a negative sense that of preventing, on the one hand, the domination of the forces of reaction—forces which, in their most monstrous form, are properly called fascist—or, on the other hand, the domination of communism.

But teachers' organizations need also to be especially careful here lest they fall into one or both of two very dangerous errors. The first is that of holding that, because fascism and communism are both extremes to be avoided by a democratic philosophy, and both deserve in important respects the label "totalitarian," therefore they must necessarily be identical. For, granting *some* similarities (educationally, for example, they both frankly utilize indoctrination), we must always remember that the philosophy of communism is permeated with humane values and governed by social goals completely antithetical to the values and goals of fascism. Take but one of many instances: the

latter's doctrine of superior races—a doctrine which communism repudiates.

If conservative propagandists are heavily accountable for the first error, numerous Marxists are for the second. This is the libel that any opposition to communism means thereby covert or open support of the traditional political-economic order—hence of the forces of reaction. Often, of course, such opposition does mean this, and communists have ample cause to examine the motives of their critics. Here again, however, is a glaring example of the "all-and-some" fallacy: to argue that because *some* critics of communism support the status quo of privilege and exploitation, therefore *all* necessarily do so, is untrue. Many "left of center" educators, for example, are as militantly aligned against that kind of evil as are communists themselves. But they believe there is still time and opportunity to build an international program of education-and-power as an alternative much to be preferred to the communist program. Theirs is a *democratic* radicalism—precisely the organized radicalism now so much needed by teachers whose values are also deeply theirs.

Among the difficult problems facing this kind of alternative to communism, one deserves additional comment in relation to the role of organized teachers. This is the problem of whether deliberate cultivation of such a majority movement will not itself produce retaliatory measures by the forces of reaction. Teachers, in other words, are vulnerable to the argument that any kind of unified effort on their part to challenge entrenched power will itself be quickly challenged—and repressed. Being organizationally weak (as surely they are thus far), being exposed to the most public sort of inspection, yet at the same time being in a strategic position to influence young people, teachers are among the first to feel the sting of the reactionary's whip.

The problem is a serious one. The organized teacher's strategic efforts here can only be empirical: they demand careful planning and cooperation if they are not to boomerang against him. Here one central conclusion must be driven home. Attempts at retaliation, while virtually inevitable, certainly do not

justify feeble and timid irresponsibility. On the contrary, they are all the more justification for the most forthright kind of responsibility. At heart this issue can be clarified not only by close, disciplined association with the majority forces of expansion, but by unified, aggressive action.

VII

Teachers should appreciate, meanwhile, that communism remains in certain ways a real, overt movement appealing to great numbers of these forces. Accordingly the educational profession is compelled, whether or not it enjoys the prospect, to decide what the attitude of its organizations shall be, particularly toward the communist-dominated areas of Eastern Europe and Asia.

If here, again, educators would among themselves be unlikely to find complete agreement, one fact is crystal clear. The communist movement, whether at home or abroad, cannot be liquidated either by wishes or by calumny. To be sure, it could, possibly, be liquidated by atomic war—as some spokesmen for the dominant American minority, among others, violently advocate—but such a war would probably mean the liquidation of most remaining areas of the earth as well.

While there is no final assurance whatever against this kind of bloody struggle between two powerful and often ruthless minorities, another fact is equally clear: namely, that the overwhelming masses of the world do not want this most awful of catastrophes to happen. They do not want it, for they know who will be its most numerous victims. Thus we return to the one sane strategy left open before them—to muster their own strength, to unify that strength, and through their ensuing majority control of both national and world governments to demonstrate their indubitable superiority over every lesser group.

In one sense, it follows that the struggle today remains chiefly, not a two-way, but a three-way struggle among *three* minorities—entrenched interests, organized communism, and an emerging democratic radicalism—all of them vying for the good will and support of the majority itself. The first would exploit that

support for the perpetuation of its own dominant power, as it has done for generations. The second would dictate to the majority, even though to a larger extent ostensibly in the latter's own interests. The third would, through the exercise of democratic leadership, help that majority to *prove to itself* that it alone can and should become completely sovereign.

As for the communist bloc which meanwhile continues as a very "real" reality, problems of how democratic, majority movements shall relate themselves to it also remain largely empirical—to be settled as they arise, and on their own merits. Two remaining points are still relevant, however, to politically conscious teachers. First: cooperation especially with the Soviet Union on *particular* needs should be encouraged whenever possible (e.g., joining with its own trade unions in programs to stimulate international trade). And second: the majority machinery of the United Nations, UNESCO, or any similar organizations created on behalf of world order should be so greatly strengthened that no member country, *including the Soviet Union and its satellites*, can conceivably refuse to abide by its own power-backed decisions. Particularly, the right of a single member to veto any such decision should be outlawed as completely indefensible when judged by the majority-minority principles of international democracy.

thirteen

CAN EDUCATION CHANGE SOCIETY?

A favorite dogma of educational conservatives is that schools seldom if ever lead and create; they always follow and reflect. This dogma is challenged by educational liberals and radicals: the ideological pressures of economic systems, political institutions, all sorts of cultural patterns are not overlooked; they are however held to be amenable to control and direction wherever schools are willing to assume the obligations, skills, and kinds of knowledge which such control and direction demand.

The recent conduct of education does not, unfortunately, strengthen the latter case. On the contrary, we may well inquire whether in all honesty the conservative case is not, thus far at any rate, much the stronger. Look, for example, at the record of the 1930's. We are not at the moment thinking of the sad but characteristic opposition of "top brass" educators to such federal experiments as the National Youth Administration. We are

thinking, rather, of the worst years of the depression; for then, at least, an influential minority spoke out with great vigor—perhaps the greatest vigor in the history of American schools. This minority of educators not only insisted that the time had come to disown allegiance to an economic "system" which could generate such chaos and misery. It went so far as to declare that nothing less than a reorganized democracy built squarely upon public ownership and control of the major instruments of production and distribution could deserve the support of those in the profession who were deeply devoted to the values of equality and freedom.

Now at first glance this spirit of revolt seems to offer support not to the conservative but to the liberal theory. And up to a point, of course, it does. At second glance, however, and especially in the perspective of subsequent years, one may inquire whether such a view is sound. For surely the earnestness of a conviction is tested partly by its durability—by the perseverance with which its devotees cherish its essential character through the course of fickle and fortuitous events. By the same token its superficiality may be tested by the readiness with which one is willing to soft-pedal or seriously to compromise when a conviction is no longer quite so fashionable, or when events seem momentarily to relax the demand for its vigilant expression.

What evidence is there to show that those among us who, a few short years ago, stood for a thoroughgoing cooperative economy—what evidence demonstrates that we still regard this as the most crucial of all tasks facing democracy? It is unnecessary to say that all or even most of us who made this declaration have since denied it. Nor need we say that those who now deny it, even though they once made it, may not suppose they have found good reasons for changing their minds. We do however call attention to the incontestible fact that, as the country staggered to its hands and knees upon the wreckage of the depression, as the New Deal managed to achieve piecemeal reforms, as "prosperity" slowly rounded the corner once more largely through the ironic necessity of preparing again for war—the forthrightness of educational criticism, with occasional excep-

tion, has seemed to decrease almost in exact ratio to the increasing demand of such events upon popular attention. Some of our energy, which had hitherto gone into hard and sharp analysis of the failures of our economy and into far-reaching hypotheses of correction, has been siphoned off into largely negative, however legitimate, attacks upon communism. And even those of us who have still directed some semblance of attention to more constructive issues are less inclined to elaborate the vast implications of the major conviction we had been so eager formerly to assert. At most we have talked about a "mixed economy," a somewhat nebulous "peace," and little directly in terms of that potent conviction itself.

One may easily reply, of course, that World War II was largely responsible for recent shifts of attention. But such a reply is not reassuring. For what, after all, was this war if not but another and more horrible link in the chain of causes and effects of which the depression was only earlier? As a matter of fact, if the failure of our traditional system was adequate reason to favor a reconstructed order in 1933 one may ask whether there is not vastly more reason to favor it now.

The reason for these comments is to raise the question of what the attitude of educators should be in the precarious period we now face. With most people employed and wages good, with fear of communist totalitarianism overshadowing devotion to democratic reconstruction, we are likely again to lend unwitting support to the conservative position. We easily relax our vigilance, bury our indignations, and with other apologists encourage the nation's classrooms to preserve the status quo.

If we do these things, however, and too many of us *are* doing them, we should know in our hearts that we are betraying our own deepest convictions. We should know that the burning causes of depression and war are not removed with a prosperity made possible largely by nonproductive preparation for war. We should know that the causes remain, and again that only the most courageous examination and advocacy of basic change can possibly eradicate them. This is why the spirit and substance of our earlier convictions, though certainly not the same ones

in every particular, are so desperately needed in the years just ahead.

The educational conservative can still be wrong. Indeed, our greatest hope is that he *is* wrong. But such hope cannot be generated by concealing from ourselves the force of his indictment. It can be generated rather by facing that indictment squarely and then, thoroughly aware of the temptation to fall victim to what he himself actually justifies, demonstrating that the forward-viewing educator is after all right—that vital education, aligned with other forces of expansion, can and must lead toward creation of a new free world.

II

Granting, then, that a great array of evidence could be assembled to show how the schools are utilized in behalf of ideological reinforcement, granting that honest assessment of this evidence cannot be avoided—indeed, that it is imperative—we are obligated to assess with equal honesty whatever resources we may find of a legitimately positive, hopeful sort. That these, even now, are much greater than we might suppose at first glance, we shall seek to illustrate throughout the remainder of this volume. Meanwhile, let us take inventory of several of our more comprehensive resources.

The first of these is a deep and genuine vitality in the democratic heritage itself. With its noble belief in the decency and worth of common people, this heritage found one of its most epochal expressions in America's establishment of free public education. To be sure, the latter was regarded from the beginning, both by many businessmen and by some labor leaders, as a bulwark of the young capitalist order. By no means merely so, however: for millions it was a new and potent symbol of the forces of expansion. It meant for these millions that at last they could hope to acquire the same kinds of learnings and dexterities which, for too many previous centuries, had been the exclusive privilege of entrenched minorities—of the forces of contraction.

In the intervening century since the firm establishment of

such "people's schools," moreover, a good deal of this spirit and purpose has survived. It is seen, for example, in the inspiration of American education to peoples of other lands who have hungered for similar opportunity. It is seen in the stubborn insistence of the American Federation of Labor, from its founding well over fifty years ago down to our day, that public education not only provide services useful to the workingman, but that he have a strong voice in its direction. It is seen in those too rare courses in history or literature which treat the past as, in decisive ways, a struggle for self-realization on the part of the largest possible majority, a struggle in which education shares by no means unimportantly. Hence, despite skillful distortions at the hands of ideologists who interpret tradition in their own convenient light, the belief that public schools should be controlled in the interests of and by this great majority is a belief rooted deep in the soil of our culture.

III

Another asset lies in the fact that teachers—indeed the entire personnel of education—are restless. Dissatisfaction with the typical, ideology-weighted curriculum is probably more widespread today than ever. Inadequacy of salary and insecurity; the overworked schedules and constrained lives which teachers are compelled to endure; the outworn school equipment and plants of thousands of communities; the Jim Crow discriminations suffered by Negro children—these are no longer occasional complaints.

This restlessness, to be sure, is still amorphous. Teachers are uncertain as to what they should do. Scientific studies of their attitudes reveal a mixture of conservative and liberal-radical beliefs which in turn reflect still greater confusion about conflicting philosophies of education. As in the case of society at large, moreover, this condition has its dangerous aspects. It invites race-hating, labor-baiting, red-baiting, fascist-minded demagogues to move in, to capitalize upon fears and frustrations at least as chronic among teachers as anyone else. Nevertheless, it is also hopeful. It stimulates the teacher, and hence his stu-

dents, to appreciate that they too are enmeshed in far-reaching, often irrational conflicts. It generates tensions which in turn may eventuate in more consistent, directive educational thought and action. Such eventuation is by no means undesirable. It clears the air of clouds of confusion and so enables the teacher, administrator, or student, to choose more consciously between one rather than another cultural alignment.

IV

Nor should we overlook, in the next place, the significance of more modern types of education—types exemplified by the international, progressively-oriented New Education Fellowship. To some extent, critical and reflective learning is now advocated, even practiced, in many countries of the world. Administratively, moreover, critics have so persistently called attention to the glaring inconsistency between democratic ideals and autocratic authority that direction of school systems here and there has actually shifted to a more participative policy. Even traditionally conservative educational organizations such as the National Education Association are now coming under more progressive influences.

This is not to assert either that the schools have already been transformed, or that the "new education" is sufficient. Nevertheless, to appreciate the potent influence of progressivism, particularly in loosening the stranglehold of conservative theory and practice, and thus in preparing the ground for the needed outlook, is entirely deserving.

V

Again, the contention that education must necessarily perform a conservative role, because throughout history it has always been a bulwark of social reinforcement, is open to question.

Actually, education has aided *both* reinforcement and change, depending upon the specific culture of which it is part. The rising capitalist order of our earlier history, for instance, was sufficiently dynamic so that the controlling minority could well

afford to encourage schools to support and anticipate its interests. True, this minority became gradually more cautious, more resistant to change, as so too did the schools. Yet even during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the conception of education as a mere agent of the prevailing ideology has never been entirely accepted. Had it been, there could be no record whatever of intellectual or moral dissent through education; but there is such a record. Had it been, we could not show that the American heritage includes a widely cherished belief in education for the welfare of the people as a whole, not of some entrenched minority—a belief which also implies that even thoroughgoing change may be entirely legitimate if measured by that welfare.

Finally, the conservative argument is in any case an example of the genetic fallacy. To insist that what has been must always be flies in the face of mutations in nature, of abrupt turns in history, of the evolution of new institutional forms, of new ideas, inventions, arts, moral codes. History does not and need not always repeat itself. Neither does nor need education.

The heart of the present view then is that, while we ought to appraise coldly and scrupulously the potent reinforcing influence of education throughout history—indeed, effective counteraction demands it—we need also, and just as legitimately, to advocate and effect far-reaching departures from such influence. The alternative is but educational defeatism in the name of historical scholarship.

VI

The present age of crisis likewise contributes power to a constructive approach. For education today is not only typified by a salutary restlessness; not only widely influenced by types of theory and practice which at least stimulate experimental-mindedness and cooperative conduct. The fact is that hundreds of thousands of teachers are already moving rapidly toward a new, future-oriented point of view. In countries like Denmark, or even as close to home as Mexico and the Province of Saskatchewan, the emergence of attitudes and programs in behalf of

social change is becoming more apparent in the schools. Gratifying also is the far from trivial influence of many teachers in the political and economic life of their respective countries: Israel, for example.

In America, despite all its handicaps and weaknesses, the profession is by no means without similar symptoms. Thus, in the late 1940's teachers in various small and large communities chose, for virtually the first time in our educational history, to go on strike rather than to endure any longer the miserable salaries and overworked schedules by which they had too long been victimized. While strikes are always properly a last resort, above all in education, nevertheless by this action teachers were identifying themselves with the organized vanguard of the working people whose final recourse has often been precisely the same strategy. More than this, they were sensitizing themselves, as no amount of formal training could, to the social realities of group conflict; and they were puncturing the dubious belief that the leisure-class status of their profession prohibits such "undignified" conduct.

There are other indications. The very foundation-stone of the teachers' union movement, notwithstanding other stringencies in official policy, is the axiom that the future of free schools—like the future of free culture—rests with organized workers more than with any other section of industrial society. There is growing recognition even by less clearly oriented professional associations that democracy means democracy for *all* races, *all* creeds, *all* economic classes, not simply for the white race, Christian religion, or businessmen. There is widespread, if still superficial, acceptance among teachers of the belief that national sovereignty must go.

VII

A further factor in the social-change potential—more subtle than the others but at least as significant—is the reconstructionist belief that, once understood, the main characteristics of the emerging outlook are more convincing, hence more "partially defensible," than alternative outlooks. This assumption follows,

afford to encourage schools to support and anticipate its interests. True, this minority became gradually more cautious, more resistant to change, as so too did the schools. Yet even during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the conception of education as a mere agent of the prevailing ideology has never been entirely accepted. Had it been, there could be no record whatever of intellectual or moral dissent through education; but there is such a record. Had it been, we could not show that the American heritage includes a widely cherished belief in education for the welfare of the people as a whole, not of some entrenched minority—a belief which also implies that even thoroughgoing change may be entirely legitimate if measured by that welfare.

Finally, the conservative argument is in any case an example of the genetic fallacy. To insist that what has been must always be flies in the face of mutations in nature, of abrupt turns in history, of the evolution of new institutional forms, of new ideas, inventions, arts, moral codes. History does not and need not always repeat itself. Neither does nor need education.

The heart of the present view then is that, while we ought to appraise coldly and scrupulously the potent reinforcing influence of education throughout history—indeed, effective counteraction demands it—we need also, and just as legitimately, to advocate and effect far-reaching departures from such influence. The alternative is but educational defeatism in the name of historical scholarship.

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of course, from certain arguments of preceding chapters—the argument, for example, that self-realization in all its components can be demonstrated to be the supreme value embracing our goal-seeking interests; or the argument that the national and international purposes commensurate with this value become more and more plausible as we learn more and more about their character.

If, then, these are reasonable expectations for the majority of men, are we not justified in regarding them as similarly reasonable for the educational profession? For with all its grave limitations, it does have access, after all, to some of the evidence regarding the historic and contemporary world; it does sometimes practice communication more effectively than the average group of citizens.

Above all, by its very nature the profession does often try to concern itself as best it can with the welfare of those for whom it is organized. When it is said that teachers belong to a profession of service, the statement is not merely romantic or trite; it is largely deserved. The unfortunate fact is not that the intentions of teachers are unworthy, but that often, quite innocently, they have misconstrued the nature of that service.

The basic values of most school people, in short, are or could become sound; and, given clarity and commitment about these values as ends, we may anticipate increasing recognition of the need to take sides with the means required to win them. From the point of view of teacher-training, the imperative task is again that of explicating the implicit—of drawing those *potential* goals, which now only vaguely, eclectically, govern the profession or which are concealed by ideological smokescreens, up to the level of the *actual*, and of doing so with maximum speed.

VIII

One further and crucial factor is the situation of the world at large—particularly the solidifying of dynamic group amalgamations for or against the widening of economic, political, scientific, esthetic, and other kinds of privilege.

The great importance of this situation is, of course, that

education's own influence depends primarily upon the strength and sanction it receives from the cultural forces with which it is interfused. Thus far, but only thus far, the conservatives are right. Where they are wrong is in supposing that such forces are always merely ideological, merely reinforcing—a generalization oversimplified to the point of fallacy because it fails to perceive, not only the incipient forces of constructive change which have been present even in fairly stable and mature historic cultures, but the often militant forces of constructive change present in unstable and aging cultures.

We observe around us countless manifestations of these forces at work in our own culture. A new articulateness, a new sense of collective strength, a newly wrathful but righteous indignation, a new hymn of hope for the fulfillment of a world-wide, democratic humanity—all are mingled together in a vast, rumbling, clumsy, infinitely powerful mass of hundreds of millions of men, women, children; blacks, whites, yellows; Jews, Christians, Mohammedans; peasants, professionals, laborers; artists, doctors, teachers.

Herein is the great source of strength for tomorrow's education. Here, indeed, is the source of all other reconstructive potentials we already find emerging. The imminent task before us is to harness the schools to this strength—to this giant of democratic power.

PART THREE

New

Frontiers

in Education:

Some

Examples

fourteen

WORKERS' EDUCATION— A NEGLECTED OPPORTUNITY

Something phenomenal is happening in American education. Phenomenal because almost entirely outside the sphere of public educational institutions—in fact, quite unknown not only to millions of students but probably to many teachers and administrators. From many places where it is attempted, come reports of such enthusiasm as to justify the envy of our most successful schools. All this is happening, moreover, despite indifference, sometimes even hostility, on the part of influential community groups; and despite a nearly complete lack of public financial support.

Workers' education—for it is this of which we are speaking—has, of course, been attempted intermittently in America for many years. To mention only one example, Brookwood Labor College, which was founded in 1921, graduated over four hundred young men and women during its sixteen years of exist-

ence. Its struggle to survive and its achievements in the face of inadequate endowment are a dramatic story which still awaits proper telling.

For a number of reasons, however, workers' education on a national scale has developed in earnest only within about the past decade and a half. Most important of these reasons is the tremendous growth of the trade-union movement. Thus there arose, with new and old unions alike, sudden pressing problems of such complexity as to tax and sometimes to bewilder their most seasoned leaders—problems both of internal organization and of external relationships with other unions, employers, and government. To meet these problems, rank-and-file members as well as leaders required immediate knowledge of parliamentary law, labor legislation, and other practical necessities. But many of them saw, too, that such necessities were not enough, that their great unwieldy organizations were inescapably tied up with the whole pattern of democracy—that their ultimate defeat or success depended upon the clearest possible understanding of this pattern in terms of the economic, political, cultural, and other forces of which it is fashioned and to which labor contributes a vital share.

It was plausible, then, that new labor schools should be formed or old ones expanded, and that unions should begin to build educational departments of their own. A few such departments, to be sure, existed even before the founding of Brookwood. Nevertheless, workers' education as a national movement has now reached the stage where it is estimated that several hundred thousand organized workers are participating in some program. That this number will increase as facilities permit seems a foregone conclusion. Here, indeed, is a new frontier in education.

II

Although it is not our function here to describe this movement in detail, yet in the light even of our sketchy observations one may legitimately ask why workers' education is *a neglected opportunity*.

Every judgment of social experience involves consideration of comparative values. That the growth and vitality of workers' education are promising signs to those, at least, who sympathize with its principles is perfectly true. But like many another dynamic movement in history, its very expansion calls for critical appraisal of its actual achievements in the light of its potential ones. Thus it is also true that workers' education remains today—when so compared—woefully neglected, on the one hand, and a thrilling opportunity, on the other. Obviously, the one aspect of this challenge is complementary to the other, as we shall attempt to show from four points of view.

It is clear, first, that vast numbers of workers themselves neglect their opportunity. A few hundred thousand engaged in some educational activity, commendable though this beginning surely is, constitutes but a fraction of the number now organized—a minute percentage of the fifty or so millions who make up the country's wage-earning population. Blame for this situation does not, of course, rest wholly with them; on the contrary, as we shall try to point out, the causes are much deeper. Nevertheless, even the most socially conscious sections of the workers—the trade unions—have at times been slow in appreciating the importance of education as an official part of their activities. The number of unions with meager or desultory programs, if they have any at all, are still the common type. And the unorganized workers are much worse off, for they can accomplish virtually nothing by themselves.

This is not all, however. It would be doing only a disservice to the union movement to obscure the fact that its progress has been impeded at times by narrow policies, factional disputes, and by arbitrary, selfish leadership. We are not unmindful that critics of unionism have used every opportunity to play up, often to exaggerate, these experiences. Still it is also undeniable that they have occurred, and no doubt will occur again: is not this the historical record of every young and powerful movement, including those which their critics admire so much more? To guard against these costly mistakes is, of course, a major responsibility of organized labor. But to guard against them success-

fully, one indispensable need is the greatest possible understanding by its own constituency of labor's own problems—problems not of immediate practicality alone, but also of significance in the long-range view and in relation to democracy as a whole.

The educational task, looked at in these terms, is truly enormous. Yet it cannot be achieved even in part so long as some unions continue to disregard educational activities altogether; or, if not this, to prohibit the free study of controversial issues in sociology, economics, and politics on the ground that they are dull, impractical, or dangerous. Such issues need not be dull or impractical; if they are, methods of study and teaching are at fault, not the issues themselves: indeed they are as much a part of workers' lives as food and drink. And if, as one union leader in the Midwest declared them to be, they are regarded as too dangerous, this only plays straight into the hands of those who expect to benefit by fear and ignorance.

The best assurance that unions will function democratically is thorough understanding by the members themselves of what democracy means in practice. Again, one fundamental step toward resolution of such sharp differences as craft versus industrial unionism is painstaking analysis of the issues by all those concerned. And a strong guarantee that collective bargaining will work with minimum hardship and maximum success is full knowledge of the history, methods, objectives of the American economy—not by employers only, but by workers in all occupations as well.

The success of educational departments in some far-seeing unions, as we shall note in the next chapter, attests to the truth of these convictions. Learning by doing, motivation from interest, and other principles of progressive education are common-places of their programs. No forcing, no drudgery here—for education is life itself. But the success of these unions contrasts all the more glaringly with the attitude toward education still too prevalent elsewhere in the labor movement—an attitude of indifference, even suspicion, which cannot be excused simply

If such a program of adult education is an ideal which America can at best only approximate, this does not lessen the opportunity before us or diminish the acuteness of our present neglect. Quite the contrary is the case.

IV

But even education for the adult population, however important, is again only an aspect of the total problem. A third angle from which to approach workers' education is that of the colleges and universities. It is our contention that here the neglect is even greater than by workers themselves or by the adult field.

First, of course, we should qualify this wholesale assertion. Many departments of social science offer courses in labor law, in the history of trade unionism, and similar topics. These are studied primarily, however, by students who are not directly involved in the problems of workers themselves; and this is so for the simple reason that the largest proportion of those able to attend college not only come from other strata of society but intend to return in the shortest possible time. This is even the underlying expectation of most students who prepare for such technological occupations as engineering.

Thus, it is almost inevitable that the perspectives from which they analyze and evaluate trade unions, for example, will be conditioned by the fact that few students have any intention of eventual affiliation themselves. To be sure, a growing number of them are discovering after graduation that, whether they like it or not, their lot lies wholly with the wage-earning classes; and not a few of them join labor organizations. Their preparation for this shift psychologically and socially, however, is usually negligible so far as training in workers' interests and struggles goes. In fact, it is probably no overstatement to assert that in most cases they must learn all over again.

The reasons for this relative neglect are deep-seated, but one reason stands out above the rest. Our institutions of learning operate to a very large extent on the foundations of an educational philosophy which leaves little room for the real needs of

education would not be empty because of the financial incapacity of young people from average wage groups to attend, this is only an indictment of a system which restricts the privileges of higher education, not an answer to the question itself. The answer, rather, is adequate scholarships for all qualified youths regardless of economic status—scholarships provided in part by organizations of workers, in part by the federal and state governments. That this is not an impossible objective is already seen, to some extent, in the support given a field of education nearer in kind to workers' education than any other—that of agriculture—and in the success of "G.I." educational programs.

V

In still one other place, perhaps the most important of all because most universal, workers' education is a neglected opportunity: in the primary and secondary schools.

What we have already said of the philosophy of education implicit in much of the higher learning is largely true here. Despite its great achievements and devotion to democratic principles, public education also proceeds in too large degree from two archaic assumptions—economic individualism and classical learning—the two strangely blended in a hybrid curriculum of courses and methodologies having only incidental bearing on the real world of today.

Thus, despite labor's long record of support of universal education, another primary reason for the growth of educational programs for and by workers themselves has been their growing awareness of this situation in the public schools. Even when workers complete their secondary education, we are told that they often remain so uninformed of the society into which they are thrown that only special study and training under labor's own auspices begin to compensate for the deficiency. Yet, it is at the same time equally plausible that if public education did its job properly; if labor's functions were more often considered with something of the same adequacy as business management; if textbooks, for example, did not so often treat workers' rights in a democracy as secondary to the rights of others; above all, if

wage-earning occupations as life aims were accorded the same dignity and concern as profit-making aims—if these things were accomplished, then workers' education distinct from public education would not be necessary to anywhere nearly the extent that it seems necessary now.

What all this ultimately implies, of course, is that public education, to serve the actual needs of our people, must bridge this gap as rapidly and solidly as possible. We do not mean that there is no valid distinction between the broad equivalence of workers' and public education, on the one hand, and education as training for special labor responsibility on the other. The need for such training under the direct sponsorship of labor organizations will probably remain; and the demand should increase for the establishment of permanent departments in universities, utilizing the latter's superior facilities, developing with the close cooperation of labor itself, and providing training for labor service comparable with other types of training.

VI

But these, though necessary, are instrumental necessities. As we have suggested in discussing adult education, the intrinsic virtue of democracy centers in an enlightened people enjoying the sovereign control of their collective life. This does not of course mean that we are all of the same rigid economic class: people differ as widely as services, abilities, needs, and wants differ; and education to be really effective must adjust itself to these differences. Nevertheless, public education should be reorganized in terms of a greatly different world than that which first established it so firmly in America. It should provide youth, first of all, with knowledge of this tremendous truth; with training to make adjustments accordingly; and with the clearest realization that despite all the individual differences in the world, the majority-democracy which is dawning upon us will be characterized increasingly by occupationally unified groupings and by cooperative enterprises of the people engaged in productive labor. In this profound sense, public education will not be *public* until it is also workers' education.

fifteen

WORKERS' EDUCATION IN AMERICA

I

The day after the British election which placed the Labor Party in power, two distinguished professors at the University of Wisconsin—one in economics, the other in history—happened independently of each other to make virtually the same comment. They said, in effect: the success of the British election in placing the Labor Party in power, with a majority in Parliament for the first time in history, is due in important measure to the great impact over the years of the workers' education movement in England.

In the United States, workers' education has never played the mass role that it has in England. Similarly, no labor government has ever been in power. Any causal relation between the positive situation in England and the negative situation in the United States is not of course possible to prove. Yet it is tempting to hypothesize that the strength of workers' education in the one

instance, and its weakness, in the other, are not purely coincidental.

We propose, then, to evaluate workers' education from something of a bias—the bias that democratic labor governments are thoroughly desirable achievements. Workers' education should become, everywhere in the world, a potent force through which the working people, who constitute the great bulk of the population, will be aided in coming into their own—in gaining power over economic and other institutions commensurate with their numbers and worth.

In common with numerous others deeply interested in the movement in America, we shall define workers' education, not so much as synonymous with adult education (and therefore reaching rather indiscriminately the middle and upper as well as working classes with all kinds of subject-matters), but rather as a particular focus of adult education. It focuses upon the vital problems and interests of the working people, especially the organized working people. In short, workers' education is first and last education of, by, and for the members of trade unions—whether those members are workers in factories who wear overalls, or white-collared workers such as clerks and, let us not forget, teachers.

In this frame of reference, activities of workers' education may be summarized under three heads: government-sponsored programs; programs within unions, as such; and programs under the sponsorship of state-supported schools. Following these descriptions, we shall present a "platform" for workers' education.

II

The most interesting venture under government leadership occurred during the 1930's. As in other countries, all kinds of projects were then established to provide employment. One of these was a workers' education program, the immediate object of which was to give work to unemployed teachers. Classes, sometimes in newly-organized "labor colleges," were set up and

hundreds of teachers were engaged to reach the organized workers.

Since then Congress has almost totally ceased any assistance. It is good to report, however, that a bill has been introduced which, if passed, will establish a permanent department of workers' education in the Department of Labor. Although certain Congressmen are sure to raise the bugaboo of "communism," the argument in its behalf is strong. For, it is pointed out, if the Department of Agriculture can spend millions of dollars annually on education, which it does, there is no defensible reason why organized workers should not be given at least a fraction of the consideration given to farmers.

III

The second area of activity lies within the trade unions themselves. By all odds the most ambitious of their programs is in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, which spends hundreds of thousands of dollars annually on education alone.

The I.L.G.W.U. requires that every new member take a course in the history and functions of the Union. It offers a variety of work in the social sciences, and also strongly emphasizes cultural activities, such as music and dramatics.

This union is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, which is our oldest national labor organization, and which until recently consisted almost entirely of craft unions. Within the last fifteen years, the Congress of Industrial Organizations was organized on an industrial union basis which, of course, means that members unite around an industry as a whole, within which they work, rather than around separate, specialized crafts. The third union organization, the Railroad Brotherhoods, brings the total membership of the three major groupings to over one-third of all American wage-earners.

The AFL for many years has sponsored the Workers' Education Bureau to serve affiliated unions as far as its feeble resources permit. The CIO has recently organized a department of education and research, with an equally inadequate staff.

Within the CIO, however, workers' education is now developing more rapidly than in the AFL, perhaps because the former is led by often younger and more dynamic men. The United Automobile Workers, which is said to be the largest union in the world, has been organizing a workers' education program, with full-time experts in charge. The Railroad Brotherhoods have developed no outstanding activities, but we should mention one rural organization, the Farmers' Union, which has built a vigorous program around the principle that farmers, too, are workers—indeed, that increasing numbers are, in fact, not owners but wage-earners, and that the interests of industrial and agricultural labor should, as far as possible, be reconciled.

We do not wish to modify the impression of our preceding chapter that only a minority of unions sponsor workers' education. Many have no program whatever. In some instances, union leaders strongly oppose any program which would better educate the rank-and-file; they know quite well that it would quickly mean a change of officers. Nevertheless, throughout the labor movement, one easily finds a minority, many of them earnest rank-and-file members, who deeply feel the need for workers' education, and who are in humble ways attempting to meet that need without fanfare and upon pitifully small budgets. The Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tennessee, is a dramatic example: the only independent, year-round labor school in the country, it has demonstrated for some years that a great deal can be done with devoted leadership, meager resources, and in the face of sometimes bitter hostility.

IV

The third field is that of cooperation with state-supported education.

Schools on the elementary and secondary levels are doing little except through incidental attention in their social studies courses. In a cross-country tour, the writer found only one public-school system which was deliberately setting up a program of education for trade unions as a regular feature of its adult-education department.

It does happen, however, that in Minneapolis (and there may be other cities) a rather significant experiment is under way. At the request of the strong local unions, city school authorities have been developing a series of units in the history of the labor movement, and the place of labor in American life, for students in the junior and senior high schools. The argument in favor of these units is that, whether they like it or not, the vast majority of the young men and women who graduate from our public schools will be compelled to decide whether to become trade unionists. Therefore, the least an educational program can do is to provide familiarity with the structures, responsibilities, and problems of these crucially important organizations. Also, if unions are to operate democratically, which of course they must do if they are to be a constructive force, young people should learn how to take part in them effectively.

Most workers' education in the state school area, however, has been developing on the university level. The School for Workers, at the University of Wisconsin, is the most famous experiment in America of this sort. It was organized about twenty-five years ago and has been operating steadily since, with a budget provided by the University itself, under the control of a joint board of University and labor officials. Its major program takes place in the summer, when workers from all over the United States come to study their problems over a period of weeks under the guidance of both university professors and experts drawn directly from unions.

Cornell University, in New York State, has recently begun another type of experiment. Instead of being a school exclusively for organized workers, as is Wisconsin's, it brings representatives of both labor and management to study their problems together. A chief assumption guiding the school is that much of the strife in our economic system is due to failure to understand the problems of opposing parties. The University of Illinois and other universities are in process of organizing similar labor-management schools. Although they do not properly meet our criterion of workers' education, they do sometimes provide courses or projects exclusively for trade unions.

No university in America has, however, established a department of workers' education comparable in budget, staff, or prestige to, let us say, a department of business administration or to schools of medicine and law. One does hear increasingly the demand for such departments on the ground that labor leadership is at least as fundamental as other kinds in our industrial society; therefore, that it deserves the same quality of training. Possibly the nearest approach to agreement with this assumption is at Harvard University, which has been experimenting with a one-year program for a small group of trade unionists whose expenses are paid jointly by the University and the unions which select them.

Some universities have begun to recognize their obligations to the organized worker in more modest ways. Courses in collective bargaining and similar problems are offered through extension divisions, and week-end institutes are sometimes held with the cooperation of either the AFL's Workers' Education Bureau or the other major national service organization—the American Labor Education Service.

V

Even this brief sketch reveals that workers' education in America is both a controversial and not altogether "respectable" academic field. Let us mention a few of the points of debate. One is the question of whether or not workers' and adult education should be distinguished. Another is the question of academic freedom: whether unions should limit their studies to topics compatible with their respective policies. Still another question has to do with the relations of public education to workers' education—the issue here arising from the common accusation that the public schools have been so conditioned by anti-union prejudice that they cannot be trusted to give fair education to workers.

Perhaps the best way to clarify such issues is to turn now to a minimum "platform" for workers' education—a platform which would probably receive the support of a number of American leaders in the field.

1. *Workers' education should have points of relationship with, but be properly distinguished from, adult education in general.* We may put it this way: all workers' education is adult education, but not all adult education is necessarily workers' education. The problems of workers are, in a real sense, focused problems; they have to do with issues which arise out of the fact that countless millions of men and women in every part of the world owe their levels of income as well as their working conditions primarily to the power and influence which organized affiliation with other workers makes possible. Even a casual observer is of course aware that the role of trade unions is characterized by tensions, conflicts, and also by extraordinary achievements. To discover how these organizations may function effectively depends, in the last analysis, upon the degree of informed intelligence possessed by their members. To provide such intelligence, and to implement it through action, is the first aim of workers' education.

This can only mean that such problems as collective bargaining, labor-management relations, and the political functions of labor, should be central. The history of labor unionism, the structure and operation of unions, the place of the labor movement in the world order of our time, are other tremendously important areas for educational consideration.

"Peripheral" aspects of workers' education—music, dramatics, literature, and others—have less direct practical significance. But they can and should be closely integrated with the curriculum as a whole. At the School for Workers, for example, music is often introduced in terms of its social as well as esthetic role. Literature may be studied by selecting novels which give the worker a keener sense of his crucial importance in the evolution of civilization. The line which divides such specifically focused activities from more general adult education is not easy to draw in all cases. The worker may often reach into the more general field of adult courses, just as any adult may, on occasion, reach into the sphere of workers' problems. As a principle, however, the distinction remains.

It is equally obvious that workers' education proper should be

distinguished from technical or vocational education. The latter likewise belongs in the wider compass of both public school and adult education. Again, however, workers' education may on occasion borrow from, while not being identified with, specific training in skills.

2. *If workers' education is to succeed it must utilize the most modern techniques of learning.* Clearly, this "plank" in our platform applies to all education. If it is true, however, that children do not learn well under traditional school structures and methods, how much more true is this fact for adults, who are not compelled to attend school, and who simply will not do so if they are not sufficiently motivated or concerned.

William H. Kilpatrick has said that the first principle of good education is that we learn what we live, and we live what we learn. This can only mean that the first rule of effective workers' education should be the living interests of the people whom we are trying to reach. Teacher-leaders should always begin where students are, in terms of their own social levels, and above all in terms of problems which are immediate to them. This is the only successful kind of motivation. It requires consummate skill to ferret out these interests and problems, and to utilize them as "springboards" from which workers can learn together with enthusiasm for what they are learning.

For the same reasons, workers' education should increasingly emphasize cooperative group learning and group processes in place of superimposed instructional methods such as lectures. The use of visual aids, round-tables, discussion techniques, community resources, indeed every device of modern schooling, applies at least as fully to workers' education as to any other type.

3. *There is need for increasing cooperation between state-supported education and workers' education.* We sympathize with the skepticism of some labor leaders over the extent to which public education may be helpful. There is no question but what many schools have either ignored the problems of workers, or have prejudiced young Americans against trade unions. For

this and other reasons, workers' education programs will necessarily, in many instances, continue under labor sponsorship.

No a priori reason, however, can be discovered to prove why public education should be inevitably and always biased against labor. Initial efforts to introduce units of the Minneapolis type are foretokens of a more balanced approach, and an illustration of the fact that it can be done.

There is another reason, developed more fully in Chapter XI, why cooperation between labor and the public schools is desirable. In proportion to their training, teachers are notoriously among the poorest paid public servants. And it is at least a defensible contention that they will continue to be not only poorly paid, but overworked and insecure, until they awaken to their actual social status in our society—until, in short, they recognize that they too are workers, albeit intellectual workers, who should identify themselves with the great masses of other wage-earners constituting the overwhelming majority of citizens.

Yet, we may question whether the tangible benefits that teachers could gain from such affiliation are as important as the intangible values of heightened morale, enthusiasm, and enlightenment that would reward them by associating more closely with rank-and-file citizens of the community. No better way can be found by which teachers may translate their creed into practice, and carry such translation into actual classroom work.

4. *Workers' education, like all kinds of public education, should be intellectually free.* By this we mean free to consider and to form judgments about the most controversial issues of our time. The kind of workers' education which teaches only one official labor policy, which excludes thorough consideration of alternative policies, is nothing short of indoctrination (defined earlier as the attempt to inculcate one doctrine as absolutely true, by comparison with which all alternative doctrines are false), and is indefensible in honest education.* For this reason, we should equally criticize either workers' education which taught only the official position of one or another labor

* See Chapter X.

organization, or workers' education sponsored by the Communist Party.

This does not mean that teachers as workers should lack convictions, for a conviction is nothing less than a reasoned conclusion. But every teacher is obligated to familiarize his students with his own convictions early in any course or project—not in order to impose himself upon these students, but on the contrary to enable them to be more critical of him.

Nor does this mean that workers' education should be limited to innocuous consideration of "all sides of the question." The aim should be to arrive at group decisions by social consensus, by which we mean—

- (a) awareness of as much evidence as possible;
- (b) open testimony about and communication of that evidence;
- (c) reaching maximum agreement within the appropriate group, upon the basis both of that evidence and its communication.

5. *Effective programs should develop through joint sponsorship and planning.* Workers' education will not succeed if it is set up either by a small hierarchy of labor leaders or by school administrators. The best guarantee of success, therefore, is co-operative planning, cooperative criticism, and cooperative implementation at every stage.

6. *Workers' education should be governed by a clear-cut and articulate philosophy.* Three of its principles may be re-emphasized here as especially apropos.

(a) Workers' education is an excellent illustration of the sound axiom that all education is a lifelong process. Psychologists now agree that, as long as people live, they are in some ways growing; and as long as they grow they are also learning. The trouble is that too often they learn badly—that is, they learn willy-nilly from the most direct stimuli around them: newspapers, radio, and other sources which often are warped and misleading.

This truism is crucial today. For, in our speeding civilization, what John Jones learned in school even two or three years ago

may be already obsolete this year. The need for directed learning which is as reliable as possible is thus vastly more than a luxury: if adults are to do the job of running their own institutions with intelligence and good judgment, it is indispensable.

Learning as a lifelong process is an axiom which holds, of course, for all adults. Again, however, because workers are in the vast majority everywhere in the world, the kind of education which concerns itself with them is pressingly important.

(b) The traditional dualism which has separated school from community should be dissolved. Rather, the community, with all its complex institutions and problems, should itself become a school.

The good school of today and tomorrow thus extends into the highways and byways of city and country—everywhere that people are living and working. The symbolic walls which surround traditional schools should be torn down, so that there may be a constant stream of two-way traffic between libraries, laboratories, recreation halls of the school proper and the community around them. By "two-way traffic" we mean not only, therefore, that children should spend a much larger proportion of their time participating in the life of the community, under expert guidance, but that adults should regard the school as a neighborhood center to which they come for recreation, companionship, group experiences, and for constant help in solving their local problems.

The community school—one of the thrilling new conceptions of modern education—is well epitomized by lively workers' education. For, again, since workers are so abundant in the average community, it is not only their right but their obligation to regard the school as one of the chief magnets of their social experience.

(c) The philosophy of workers' education should finally be grounded in a challenging conception of democracy as that society, we have said, in which the great majority—the working people—rule in fact as well as in theory. This does not mean that the minority should be ignored; on the contrary, the right of the minority as the supreme critic of the majority is basic.

Nevertheless, when we say the majority rules we mean that it is the final judge, after all criticisms are considered, of what is best for the welfare of society.

The first task of education thus becomes that of helping the majority to determine as often and clearly as possible what its actual, rather than imagined, interests may be; and so that its decisions on policies will best assure that its interests are recognized and realized. The most vital education for our time that we might construct would enable the majority of people to learn how to equate their sovereign right to rule with their maximum interests. By the same token, it would aim to prevent this right from being utilized in behalf of any minority which sought to deceive them into exercising their power against their own best interests.

Workers' education, in this perspective, becomes a potent instrument through which democracies are themselves more completely realized. Also, it expresses the belief that education for effective work is education through which man most richly expresses his own dignity and fulfills his own creative destiny.

sixteen

INTERGROUP RELATIONS THROUGH EDUCATION

1

The field of intergroup relations is so extensive that we propose to bring it into focus at once through the lens of public education, and more particularly through typical activities now being developed in real American schools. We shall merely suggest by sampling how the broad aims of intercultural democracy may be translated into specific practice by providing learning situations which are integral with the lives of those who learn.

Always we must remember, however, that no single school is any more exactly like another than are two or three communities ever identical. Each successful practice must emerge from the needs, resources, interests, and environments of every particular situation. Intergroup education simply will not succeed if it is superimposed. While basic principles and purposes governing such education should be generally agreed upon, there is no

fixed, ready-made pattern of practical application. Rather, students, parents, teachers, and administrators should together build their own programs in constant, vital relation to their own patterns of living.

Let us consider three major areas of activity, each of which is interrelated with the other two: (1) teacher-pupil-administration relationships; (2) curricular and extracurricular projects; (3) community-school cooperation.

II

Administrative policies. Before a school system can clearly and consistently deal with the difficult field of intercultural education, it must necessarily clarify its own over-all policy. Often a system more or less assumes that its principles of democratic education and their bearing on general practices are sufficient—that if the schools are committed to such ideals as equal opportunity for all children, this necessarily applies also to members of minority groups.

Actually, however, the generalizations in which such a policy are usually phrased often fail to cope with the issues or obligations which they imply. Careful analysis may disclose discrepancy, conscious or unconscious, between universal policy and particular implementation. For this reason, our school systems are facing the need to rethink and reformulate their positions with regard to intergroup relations.

Each school administration should crystallize its own viewpoint only after most thorough consideration, and only after inviting the judgments of teachers, students, and parents. It should clarify the stand of the system with regard to such crucial matters as transfers, employment, placement, and explicit intercultural study and training. Through such clarification it becomes an invaluable supplement to any policy embracing the entire program and purpose of the system.

Relations among teachers and staff. The need for more teachers who are deeply concerned and informed about intercultural problems is pressing. The fact is that only a fraction of the more than a million in this profession have given even casual atten-

tion thus far to such problems either in their own training or in their teaching of others. That the need is being increasingly recognized, however, is evident in a number of directions.

The importance, at least potentially, of teachers' organizations as a means toward better relations is one example. Many local groups have not only interracial memberships but also interracial officers. In a few instances, they are developing intercultural programs of their own under special committees. By and large, however, teachers' organizations have not yet become sufficiently concerned either in policy or in action about intercultural problems and objectives. Local associations of the National Education Association or American Federation of Teachers could organize study groups in the area for fascinating and profitable exploration.

Any outline of opportunities among teachers would be incomplete were it to ignore the often difficult problem of mixed faculties and staffs. At this point, especially, differences between communities are acute, and no formula is universally applicable. All that can be said is that wherever mixed faculties of Negro and white teachers have been reported to us they have succeeded—thus illustrating once again that where people live and work together, their fixed notions, however prejudiced, are likely to be gradually supplanted by mutual appreciation and regard—a concomitant or informal learning of supreme importance. Some systems are hiring more teachers of the Jewish or Catholic faiths in order that there might be more equitable representation of religious groups on the staffs of public schools. To prepare both community and school personnel for more appointments of minority representatives and more mixed faculties of all kinds is one of the greatest challenges confronting schools wishing to equate living and learning. Such preparation requires careful, strategic spadework in the community as well as in classrooms. But it also requires much more extensive inservice and preservice training of teachers themselves.

This training may be provided in various ways. Workshops are one admirable means. Universities in various sections of the country regularly offer several weeks of summer study in inter-

cultural education. Besides the knowledge and techniques they acquire for use in their own schools, the attending teachers find that almost invariably the enrollment of a workshop is made up of representatives of various cultural groups with whom they are thus able to become well acquainted in the course of intensive and cooperative learning experiences. Periodic workshops and institutes in a community may also be held during weekends or even for single afternoons through the academic year.

Other types of preservice and inservice training are equally promising. Practice teaching by students in minority districts, or by student teachers representing minorities, is an invaluable experience for both them and their students. Courses in intercultural education are now regularly offered in a number of universities and teachers' colleges, on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. More attention in psychology and the social sciences is gradually being given to the cultivation of democratic attitudes toward minorities; and teachers are being made more conscious and critical of the typical prejudices which they, too, have assimilated from their social environment. These examples also point to a broadening conception of teacher-training as encompassing much more knowledge of and experience with the burning political and economic issues of contemporary society—issues which are invariably related, centrally or tangentially, to racial discrimination and segregation as well as to religious or national frictions and conflicts.

Relations among students. Clearly, the problem of democratic associations among members of any school system is one that is reciprocal among all groups which make up that system. Thus, a democratic administration encourages teachers to be democratic, and these in turn so encourage students. If students then observe members of mixed faculties working well together, and respecting each other as equals, they are sure to be readier to work well among themselves and to develop similar respect. At the same time, student contributions toward intercultural democracy can be improved even though there is still much to be done on professional levels. Student councils and clubs which are interracial in both membership and leadership are one im-

portant example. Classrooms which ordinarily include children of as many nationalities, religions, races, and economic groups as are typical of the neighborhood are another. As we shall note further below, both curricular and extracurricular activities are also rich in intercultural experiences in student relations. Meanwhile, it is of utmost importance that every teacher be alert to the need of providing opportunities for students to participate whenever possible in intercultural experiences. Too often we simply forget that the average boy or girl is ready and eager to take such responsibilities.

Such relations cannot be completely effective, of course, in systems having segregated schools. For this reason, opposition to transfers from school to school on racial grounds should be a permanent and unqualified policy of any democratic system. Moreover, school administrations should, as a matter of policy, strongly resist pressures from community groups to establish segregated schools. Yet it is only realistic to grant that segregated student bodies are at least as difficult to prevent or correct, in some communities, as segregated faculties. Neighborhood clusterings of population into ghetto-like areas, for example, sometimes inevitably fill schools almost exclusively with members of one cultural group, such as Jewish, Mexican-American, or Negro children. Again, therefore, no simple formula is adequate, however indefensible the general policy. The problem becomes primarily social—that of preventing restrictive real-estate covenants and other practices of the community which perpetuate segregation. The school should certainly become concerned about such a problem, but should recognize that the solution is economic and political as well as educational.

Where segregation does exist, one of the most promising and original opportunities to develop student good will is provided by interschool visits. The children of a school in some section with a concentrated cultural population may be invited to another school in a different section for, say, an afternoon. If the school is large, an election or contest could be planned with the aim of choosing a delegation which may report back to the whole student body. The school to be visited could likewise

choose its own group of student hosts who would be responsible for conducting their guests on a school tour and for planning entertainment. Later the visit could be returned.

This type of experiment rests upon the same sociological principle as governs the need for closer relations between teachers of various cultural groups. Often the strongest prejudices may be discovered in schools whose leaders say, "We have no problem"—by which they mean, of course, that children of one race or cultural group may be kept so completely separate from others that their attitudes are simply not clarified or tested. Hence, some communities are also beginning to experiment with intervisits between public and parochial schools; delegates from a Catholic or Lutheran school are honored as guests of a public school and, again, may later serve in turn as hosts. What either hosts or guests may learn formally from such interschool visits may be trivial, but what they gain in the by-products of respect and appreciation may be priceless.

III

Curricular projects. Opportunities to develop closer understanding of and between cultural groups through curricular efforts in which living and learning coalesce are so abundant that our examples must be regarded as merely "scratching the surface." They may consist of projects embracing several fields at once; or they may simply concentrate upon some specific intercultural problem at a specific moment as one part of a more or less standardized area of study.

The second of these two opportunities often offers a simpler starting point than the first. The art teacher, to choose one example, provides significant learning experiences whenever the painting or music of a foreign nation or racial group is related to the esthetic interests of children. No doubt American boys and girls already appreciate the spirit of Russia far more through the symphonies of Tchaikovsky or Shostakovich than through the scholarly treatises of historians. No doubt, too, they have more intimately felt the wistful melancholy of certain Negro folklore through spirituals like "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot"

than through any other medium. The teacher of fine arts who wishes to stimulate such appreciation will be careful that the examples used are as representative as possible. Thus, he will guard against overemphasizing the spiritual to the point where students think it is the only kind of music which the Negro is capable of composing. The works of William Grant Still exemplify an entirely different contribution.

In the same way, the teacher of literature or foreign language will choose selections not only from the older traditions of a country or people, but also from contemporary society. Pictures illustrating storybooks about Holland or Norway often distort the child's impressions by showing little girls in wooden shoes and quaint costumes—as though these were still typical, which they are not by any means. There is far greater need today for the kind of stories which will show that little Ivan Tovich of Russia has much the same interests, enjoys much the same kind of fun, and wears the same kind of clothes as little Willie Smith in Ohio. With this precaution, however, subjects like French or Spanish or English become not merely a means to facility in speaking or writing; they are also a means to cultural unity between America and the world. And our point is that almost any teacher, by the kind of emphasis he or she deliberately makes, may just as easily contribute to that unity as to remain indifferent to it by following the routines of mere skill or subject-matter learning.

The social studies are equally fruitful areas in which intercultural attitudes may develop along the way without necessarily introducing a separate course. Indeed, no area affords more challenging opportunity to drive home the point that the inequality suffered by the Negro, for example, can be understood only in relation to economic and social patterns which exploit his subordinate status or perpetuate prejudice against him because it is profitable to do so. The similar exploitation of Mexican-Americans as a source of cheap agricultural labor can be graphically illustrated to reveal, again, the economic roots of most minority problems. The frequent employment of women at lower wages than men might drive home our failure to

achieve equality among other than merely racial groups. The social studies teacher may also, without utilizing technical vocabulary, help to dissolve prejudice by introducing elementary facts along the way from anthropology or social psychology—facts which prove how unscientific is any doctrine of race superiority; facts revealing how economic fear and insecurity are often the motivation behind hatred of Jews; facts which show that many of us distort our notions of the Japanese or Chinese because of the powerful effects of propaganda and other kinds of oversimplified thinking.

Sometimes we hear that, while it might be all right for the arts or social studies to introduce intercultural topics, it is not within the province of the teacher of natural science to do so. The experience of many schools shows that this is a mistaken view. If intercultural understanding is important at all, every teacher shares that responsibility, no matter how supposedly "objective" his specialty. Thus science study may point out how physics, chemistry, biology, and psychology have been enriched by the contribution of minorities—how scientific ability is the monopoly of no one race, nationality, or religion. The greatest living physicist is a Jew: Albert Einstein. One of the greatest psychologists of all times, who died only recently, was also a Jew: Sigmund Freud. A distinguished organic chemist, world-famous for his long series of discoveries, was an American Negro: George Washington Carver. The physiologist might also utilize chemical analysis of human blood to prove how any belief to the effect that the properties of blood may be distinguished according to racial strain is an utterly fallacious belief of no scientific validity whatever.

The examples we have given to illustrate how teachers function within a standard curricular framework could be multiplied manifold. One final important means, however, should not be forgotten: if intercultural relations are inseparable from the whole meaning of democracy, as we have seen they are, then no opportunity should be missed to stress this truth even when no explicit mention is made of a particular minority issue as such. The noble values of equality or of fraternity cannot be deepened

too often if discussion and application of their significance are geared to the interests and living experiences of boys and girls today—if children of different colored skins or religious faiths are scrupulously respected by teachers and fellow students; and if they always share equally and cooperatively in every project, every social program, every school organization, every effort to work together in teams and groups. Here again is an obligation which all teachers, regardless of their fields, can and should assume.

Turning now to curricular projects of a more systematic and organized type, the need here is to recognize that intercultural problems are sufficiently important to deserve sustained concentration over a period of time ranging all the way from one week to a semester or whole year of work. Incidental attention of the sorts already illustrated may, of course, meanwhile continue.

One of the most promising new ventures of the unit type is in anthropology—the science of man in culture. Students who have participated in such units are often enthusiastic and fascinated by the new world which even a brief pamphlet like *Races of Mankind* opens before them. The subject is by no means too difficult for the secondary level, and it can often be organized so that the teachers of geography, sociology, history, and physiology may cooperate in its presentation.

Another systematic unit, which has been tried with twelve-year-old children, studies the great contributions to civilization of the major world religions. The discovery that not only Judaism and Christianity, but also such religions of the Orient as Buddhism, have profound similarities of belief in brotherhood and human dignity may become quite as exciting as the study of anthropology. Such a unit should not, of course, raise theological or sectarian issues; rather it should consider the chief religions as powerful forces in the history of man. Where it has been attempted, representatives of important religious groups of the community have cooperated in its planning and presentation, and considerable time has been spent with these representatives in their own churches, synagogues, and temples.

A third type of unit deals with a racial culture viewed in wide

perspective. Opportunity to integrate the social studies and arts, and thus to cross subject-matter lines, is obvious in such a unit. In a comprehensive study of, for example, the Negro people, it is well to begin with the life of the local colored community; to become personally acquainted with its representative citizens; and to visit residential sections where they are almost certain to be concentrated. A unit of this kind could, of course, attend exclusively to such local interests; or it could move outward from the immediate scene to study of Negro life in the region, nation, or world. However it is organized, its planners should be careful to give consideration to the very real difficulties which this minority, like others, faces: the temptation to limit attention to what might be called the "folklore approach"—exemplified again by the Negro spiritual—should be resisted. For, while different communities and schools are at different stages of readiness to study the complex issues involved, the aim should always be to develop a maximum sensitivity to such problems as economic discrimination and patterns of prejudice, as well as to less controversial and more romantic aspects of the relations of this "number one" minority.

Still another unit can be on international understanding. One country—Brazil or China or Italy—may be studied over a period of time so as to encompass its economic, political, educational, and other contributions. Better still is the study of world relations—the fact of the "shrinking globe" due to transportation and communication; the consequent need for a United Nations with authority and power to enforce its decisions. Geography, history, art, economics, and civics are pertinent to such a unit; but utilization of knowledge from sciences like anthropology to show the basic similarities of peoples everywhere on earth is equally profitable. Facts about other countries take on a new and exciting meaning in view of our accelerating interdependence and of the terrifying possibilities of global destruction.

Other comprehensive units than those just exemplified are numerous. Exploration of the history and contributions of nationalities in a particular city affords children opportunity to learn firsthand about their own immigrant backgrounds. A

project focusing upon the future of American life stimulates social imagination and compels young citizens to inquire about the changes which would be needed in present institutions to guarantee full equality to every citizen regardless of cultural or economic status.* Or a department like graphic arts may easily build an extensive unit around the creative achievements in painting and sculpture by one or several cultural groups.

Extracurricular projects. Since the newer principles of good education stress the close interdependence of the curricular and extracurricular, it would be erroneous to suppose that our samples above can or should be completely divorced from out-of-class activity. On the contrary, they are certain to be all the more successful as community resources are utilized and as children make direct acquaintance with the groups they are learning about. Thus it was suggested in the unit on the Negro people that contact with them be established through visits to their homes, churches, and social institutions. Similarly, any effective study of the nationalities of a city should provide means of becoming familiar with Italian or Polish neighborhoods, to meet representatives of the foreign-born in their home surroundings. Often, too, students can bring some of the results of their projects or units to the attention of fellow students or parents through exhibits, playlets, or recommendations for school and community action.

While extracurricular efforts should be and are frequently integrated, then, with the more academic type of intercultural education, many efforts are also possible which do not come strictly within the compass of the curriculum as such. Assembly programs during Negro History Week or Brotherhood Week are examples; often these may be arranged with the cooperation of community leaders representing the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People or the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Celebration of both Jewish and Christian festivals in one pageant at the holiday season has been successful in various cities. Some schools have organized "intercultural education clubs" which prepare exhibits, design posters,

* See Chapter XVIII.

or present original skits before various groups. Speakers or musicians of racial or national affiliation are often invited as guests of a class which is studying their particular cultural history.

One of the widest channels through which intercultural relations progress in schools is in games and sports. In the northern section of America, it is already commonplace for youngsters of all races, religions, and nationalities to play together on both intramural and interscholastic teams, and to build mutual respect for prowess, courage, and good sportsmanship. Bands, orchestras, and choruses are also widely and successfully intercultural in personnel. Dramatic and social events, while less widely so, are more and more intercultural in increasing numbers of schools. And as they become so, learning through living is thus exemplified in most potent and permanent ways.

The "direct" and "indirect" approaches. In both curricular and extracurricular projects, the question may arise whether it is desirable to bring out intercultural issues as directly and consciously as certain of our examples suggest. Some school leaders contend that specific focusing upon a minority like the Negro may tend to emphasize awareness of differences on the part not only of children belonging to that minority but to children of the white group as well. Hence it is better, say these leaders, to avoid intercultural topics as such, and to concentrate educational efforts upon building wholesome associations and opportunities for all groups regardless of color or creed—a method that might be called the "indirect" approach.

No one would be likely to deny that the latter is desirable. The indirect approach should permeate every classroom and every activity, for it is another name for genuinely democratic education and for the good concomitant learnings derived from such education. Also, it is suggested by the kind of project—in music, for example—where intercultural experiences are woven into a curricular area without being singled out for concentrated attention.

School leaders who would include a more direct approach, however, contend that it is unwise to advocate one to the exclu-

sion of the other. In addition to the effusion of intercultural experiences throughout the life of the school, they believe in special units and courses and specially organized extracurricular activities. They recognize that this direct approach must be planned carefully according to age levels and community patterns: very small children obviously are not so ready to study anthropological facts about races as are high school students; and some sections of the country would not as yet tolerate interracial sports. But these leaders also insist that problems of intercultural relations are too serious and too difficult to be left wholly to incidental or haphazard treatment. They fear that, while the direct approach may become mere "window dressing" to conceal rather than to help solve deep-seated problems, the indirect approach has the even greater weakness of side-stepping or diluting treatment of equally deepseated problems.

Most educators would probably now agree that the school is obligated to deal directly with international relations even though consciousness of the issues may likewise encourage children to think more clearly about nationalism. If so, however, then the school is similarly obligated to encourage thoughtful consideration of intercultural relations, even though in the process children may be made aware of differences as well as similarities between cultural groups. People do not solve problems in a democracy by avoiding them; they solve them rather by straightforward analysis, by careful consideration of alternative proposals, and then by testing out the best ones. In this effort, the direct and indirect approaches should supplement each other.

A final point to bear in mind in discussing curricular and extracurricular projects, whether direct or indirect, is that their ultimate value depends not so much upon their precise form or content as upon the extent to which the entire school is permeated from top to bottom and bottom to top with a fundamental, working philosophy of democracy. And this can only mean that teachers, students, and administrators are engaged in a common enterprise—an enterprise measured by attitudes, relationships, and cooperative sharing rather than merely by words,

examinations, or diplomas. Professor Dewey has stated the ideal of democracy as that in which every member of any group participates freely with every other member, and in which each group interacts fully with all other groups. Here, indeed, is an ideal also of intercultural understanding and association. In the degree that it is approximated by both public education and society will the problems of minorities move toward solution.

IV

Student participation. Interconnections of each of the three major areas with the other two are illustrated once more in community-school cooperation. For, as suggested in previous paragraphs, both curricular and extracurricular projects of the school should be shared cooperatively with the community as often as possible. Nevertheless, we may indicate several other ways in which this reaching into the community by the school may occur.

Children learn more deeply through the day-by-day treatment they receive at the hands of their fellows than they ever learn from books or even from the most interesting kind of formal educational activity. If a child is repeatedly excluded from a circle of classmates because of his color, cumulative effects of frustration and inferiority are almost certain not only to cut deep into his personality, but to scar it permanently. Here, then, is a chief reason why the community in which the child is living and growing up is of such crucial importance to intercultural education. No matter how expert and modern a school program may be, adult patterns of prejudice and discrimination can neutralize, if not heavily outweigh, its own most constructive efforts.

The task, therefore, of extending the work of the school into the community and of bringing the community into the school is utterly indispensable to any successful education in the intergroup field. It is the long-range task literally of helping each community to rebuild itself, and hence the attitudes and practices reflected in concomitant learnings of a democratic quality. We may illustrate its scope in terms first of students, then

of adults, and finally of organized efforts to improve economic and political practices.

Vocational training today is giving young men and women representing minority groups wider opportunities to work in community occupations from which they were formerly excluded. Some school systems maintain the rule that employable students may not be hired through the schools for part-time work in department stores or factories except on the basis of competence alone: racial or religious status may not be considered as a qualification. Equality of treatment in employment and in relations with fellow workers is a concomitant learning of great importance.

Students are also reaching into the community by cooperation in parent-teacher and other adult projects with an intercultural purpose. Through dramatic, musical, and other entertainments youngsters bring anthropological or equally important issues before their parents. On the high school level, they are organizing panels in which they appear before their parents, before service clubs, churches, and patriotic groups to discuss intercultural relations. Their cooperation in interracial sports, bands, and clubs may be a still more persuasive means to community learning. A father who proudly watches his son engage in teamwork with a boy of another race in a football game may learn a good deal about democracy without realizing at the time that he is doing so.

Adult participation. Adults may also participate directly and indirectly in intercultural education and thus strengthen the community foundations of such education. Some systems are developing adult courses and activities quite similar to the examples cited under "curricular projects," but with content and techniques geared to more mature interests. PTA's in a number of states and cities are devoting a whole season to intercultural problems, and some with mixed memberships are especially active. Workers' education, under the auspices of trade unions, is beginning here and there to explore means of bringing pertinent problems of minorities to the attention of these powerful and important organizations of citizens, and to pro-

vide more opportunities for closer association of workers with various cultural backgrounds.

Equally promising on the adult level is the relatively new conception of the community school, to which we referred in the preceding chapter. It is already being put into practice in some cities and rural areas. Townspeople gather in groups to discuss and resolve problems like health or politics, to organize sewing or canning classes, or simply for movies and other forms of recreation. Young folks use the school for afternoon games and club meetings or for evening dances. In neighborhoods of mixed nationalities and races, such avenues to mutual understanding cannot be overestimated. The school remains no longer a place from which youngsters escape gleefully at three P.M., and which adults seldom if ever enter. Rather it becomes a magnetic center of grass-roots, neighborhood friendliness.

Support of civic efforts. If the school and community are then regarded not as separate but as increasingly cooperative institutions which learn directly and indirectly from each other, it follows that support of one by the other is imperative. No school can develop effective intercultural education unless parents and others are back of it. For this reason, teachers and administrators need to work persistently on the "community front." By keeping citizens in close touch with educational plans and experiments, by gaining their informed interest, it is possible to progress much more rapidly than many schools now do. At the same time, with public backing, some schools are already able to function as spearheads of democracy, and hence to offer enlightened direction to the community itself. To serve thus as leader rather than mere follower should be the guiding principle of sound public education—a principle demanding, however, the most careful strategy in order to win maximum community confidence.

Given such confidence, the school program should be sufficiently flexible at all times to allow room and time for practical consideration of community plans and disputes. If, let us say, a housing project which would presumably improve the living conditions of the Mexican-American population is under con-

sideration, civics classes both on the secondary and adult levels should see to it that the project is debated thoroughly and frankly, the site of the project visited, and the concerned citizens interviewed.

More than this, teachers and administrators should better inform themselves about and participate in civic efforts directly. On the national level, they need to be more concerned with such proposals as equalization of education through federal aid, fair employment practices legislation, and abolition of the poll tax. On the state and local levels, interracial commissions are being set up to cope with difficult minority problems, and all members of a school system should not only familiarize themselves with the work of these commissions but should give them their wholehearted support.

In addition to concern for civic activities dealing directly with intercultural problems, school personnel—especially individual teachers—should ally themselves with economic and political groups which are seeking to expand democracy all along the line. Enthusiastic sharing in community life is one of the most rewarding means of increasing the effectiveness of teacher-citizens not only outside but within their classrooms. Their own concomitant learnings will enrich their personalities and react upon their ability to build vital, direct learnings in their students.

V

Let us remember that the examples given are only suggestive of what is being and therefore can be done. In last analysis, whatever a school decides to attempt must be its own program emerging from its own needs. The tremendous variation between communities of various sections of the country, particularly between North and South, in their attitudes and practices toward cultural groups cannot be re-emphasized too strongly. Intercultural education should therefore develop "from the bottom up" through the sharing of as many members of the school and community as possible—students and parents as well

as teachers and principals—with sensitive regard for the customs and attitudes of each locality.

At the same time, we should be incorrect to suppose that School "A" or "B" can learn nothing from School "C" or "D." Actually, those that have begun to grapple with the intergroup problem in earnest have already proved certain conclusions from which others may greatly benefit: that complete indifference or inactivity can no longer be justified to America's conscience; that America can ill afford to postpone its agenda of unfinished business in the field of intercultural relations; and that no school committed to democratic values can henceforth honestly ignore its own share in a nationwide program fast gaining momentum.

seventeen

INTERGROUP EDUCATION IN CERTAIN SCHOOL SYSTEMS

I

A survey sponsored by the American Council on Race Relations, the Bureau for Intercultural Education, the American Council on Education, the Commission for the Defense of Democracy of the National Education Association, and financed by the Rosenwald Fund, was made recently to obtain an overview of what is happening in seven fairly representative school systems concerned about intergroup and intercultural education.

The purpose of this overview was, first, to clarify and to draw together activities in this field; second, to encourage the several systems to consider whether or not they should enter more intensively into the field of intercultural education; third, to publish some of the more constructive results for use of the cooperating cities—as well as for the use of other school systems which may develop programs. The survey did not include any city in the deep South; it did, however, include cities from one

coast to the other, ranging from populations of over two million down to about thirty-five thousand.

The method primarily used was to visit schools, to interview school administrators, principals, teachers, and sometimes students, and then to speak informally with representatives of the community—not only to parents but to representatives of minority groups, business, churches, labor. A questionnaire was submitted to each of the systems, asking whether it would be willing to indicate, confidentially, the number and status of students and teachers belonging to minority groups, the number and kind of mixed activities, whether or not Negro teachers were receiving the same salaries as white teachers, and so on.

II

These school systems would be the first to agree that none of them has even begun to solve this gigantic problem. Their interest and receptivity indicate, however, that they realize the problems and dangers involved in intercultural relations, and are desirous of improvement. Five negative factors are universal throughout these cities, in varying degree.

First, teacher training is not imparting the knowledge, skills, or attitudes necessary to handle intercultural relations. All seven of the cities agree on this need, though some are doing more effective work with their teachers than others. The sociological and anthropological illiteracy of the rank-and-file American teacher with regard to racial questions is often astonishing, and the colleges of education are in large measure to blame for such illiteracy. The rigidity of the teacher toward experimentation with intercultural problems seems to increase, moreover, in direct ratio from kindergarten up through senior high school. In almost every one of these systems the elementary schools are doing the best job, the senior high schools the worst job, with the junior high schools somewhere between.

A second negative factor is inadequate "carry-over" between public schools and the wider community. The failure of at least some communities to keep up with their schools in this area is an interesting commentary on the truism that public schools

inevitably lag behind social changes. One thinks of Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma* in this connection. The dilemma of which he writes is beautifully illustrated by the sincerity with which our schools inculcate devotion to the American creed in theory, at the same time that the community fails to give the Negro people and other minority groups equality and freedom in practice. Children in the schools learn that the Negro people should be their equals in a democracy. Yet the moment they walk off the playground, their attitudes too often come under the influence of adult prejudice.

A third factor is the failure, or at least weakness, of adult education. This is a corollary of the carry-over just mentioned. In none of these seven cities can one discover a really effective adult program of the kind we have suggested at several points in the three preceding chapters.

A fourth negative is the lack in any one of these cities of an over-all plan to deal with intercultural issues. Schools study it at one level; housing commissions pay more or less lip-service to it at another; in still another place, groups of employers are talking about it, or labor councils are including it on their agendas. But nowhere does one find an integrated plan in which the respective civic departments or institutions gear in their own programs with all the others.

Finally, as a fifth factor on the negative side, one may observe certain educational confusions existing within the school systems themselves—confusions in both educational theory and practice. One example is the policy of schools in regard to transfers and districting of student populations. We find more evasion on this subject than on almost any other. There simply is no nationwide—in some cases, no citywide—program or policy which can be clearly defended.

Another example of confusion centers in the way that intercultural education is introduced in the classroom itself. The subject is something of a "fad" in certain cities. A great deal of emphasis is placed on the wonderful traditions of this or that cultural group, with little emphasis on economic, political, or social analysis of cultural problems.

No less confusing is the question of whether classrooms should deal with the cultures and problems of minority groups by what we referred to in Chapter XVI as the "direct approach." Some educators insist that the best kind of interracial education does not explicitly single out, say, the Negro people for any unusual attention in the curriculum. Others contend that if these problems are to be dealt with we must focus attention upon them realistically and forthrightly.

A final example of the confusion confronting our schools arises from what might be called the "mirror theory" of education.* Inarticulately in some cases, the philosophic issue still prevails as to whether schools are mirrors of the environment and community around them, or whether they are instruments of social change. Some say, "We cannot really do anything to the community because the community won't let us." Indeed, too many administrators rationalize their own insecurities and fears by refusing to allow study of controversial issues—for example, racial equality. Others believe that the schools can reshape the community, and that clarification of controversial issues is an essential means. Thus intercultural education becomes involved in the debate over fundamental educational policy.

III

Despite the fact that such negative factors are serious and widespread, many constructive activities are also under way throughout the country.

The first is provision of formal machinery to deal with the problem. In six of the seven cities, at least one intercultural committee has been organized. In some cities, several are active. Increasingly, school leaders recognize that the racial question is a collective question, and must be dealt with collectively. For that reason, the piecemeal, individualized approach that has been so popular in American education is gradually being supplemented by recognition that we should have a comprehensive over-all approach as well.

* See Chapter XIII.

The experience of one city illustrates this machinery at work. Three educational committees are dealing with intercultural relations. One operates entirely within the public schools and, under an energetic administrative committee, has set up nearly two hundred intercultural committees within individual schools of the city. A second, which might be called a lay committee, functions as a kind of intermediary between schools and community. Its main task is to exchange information as to what is happening throughout the city. The third educational committee is a subcommittee of the mayor's interracial council, and is now engaged chiefly in developing a program to reach citizens through billboard displays, moving pictures, radio programs, and other media. It has asked the city council for fifty thousand dollars to carry on this public propaganda.

A second area of achievement is the inservice training of teachers. In three of the seven cities, intercultural courses are being offered by local colleges. A number of teachers in these systems have been sent to workshops at Harvard, Columbia, and other institutions. The most ingenious idea, however, for inservice training came, not from the school administration, but from a local of the American Federation of Teachers which proposed that about fifty members especially interested in this problem volunteer to be transferred on a temporary basis to schools confronted with difficult cultural situations. During the period of a year or more these volunteers would endeavor, by example and friendly contact, to build a more democratic outlook among their colleagues. The proposal assumes the sound principle that —far more than courses, lectures, and institutes—what counts is the day-by-day, informal association of teachers with others who already have developed the kind of attitudes which are essential to good human relations.

In a third area—adult education—promising activities are also under way. In one city, a plan has been set up by which one person devotes full time to reaching rank-and-file citizens not ordinarily reached by adult education—an expert in the "art" of breaking down barriers between schools and particularly the more submerged groups of the community. Another city—the

smallest in the group—allowed one teacher half-time over a period of six years for the express purpose of making contacts with cultural groups. These contacts, made in homes, often informally around the supper table, played a major part in developing a remarkable community-wide program of intercultural education.

This last illustration provides a transition to the fourth area of constructive activity—student participation. In the city just mentioned, a whole series of public performances and exhibits was developed and presented by local cultural groups. These events were colored with folklore and sometimes sentimental tradition; but they succeeded in drawing Spanish-American, Negro, Chinese-American, and other groups into a cooperative community enterprise. Children and teachers of the schools also shared in the enterprise, and units on the various cultures were developed in close correlation with the adult program.

Probably the freest intercultural participation among students is in extracurricular activities, mostly in athletic events. In six of the seven cities, mixed teams of every variety have played together for many years; and even in the seventh, the schools are now beginning to destroy barriers. Least progress in extracurricular activities is in dancing and swimming. In one city, authorities have closed a swimming pool "for repairs" which, according to some informants, are deliberately delayed in order to avoid directly facing the question of whether mixed racial groups should swim in the same pool. In none of the cities do junior or senior high school children of different races dance together freely. When youngsters of two colors have occasionally ventured on a floor, the incident is usually talked about for months afterward as either a terrible blight upon the community, or as a truly phenomenal achievement.

The common election of students from various cultural groups as officers of school organizations manifests an indigenous desire among youngsters to be democratic. One incident in extracurricular dramatics deserves special comment: a Negro coach in a mixed school decided to try casting his plays according to talent only, not according to skin color. Sometimes Negro

children play white parts; sometimes father and mother parts are played by Negro and white children in opposite roles. The parents who come to these dramatic events have never protested.

In still another area, a number of steps have been taken toward mixing of faculties. Only in two of the seven cities do Negro teachers teach Negro children alone. In two other cities Negro teachers are teaching several all-white classes; and in one city a Chinese teacher is also teaching all-white classes. Between these extremes one finds many mixed faculties and mixed student bodies. Mixed faculties of some kind exist in all seven of the cities, even though only a single Negro teacher may be present on an entire faculty.

Recently, in one city, certain Negro groups "put pressure" on the school administration to try an interracial experiment. A Negro school with all-white teachers was selected. An administrative official appeared before this faculty and asked if its members would be willing to include some Negro teachers. The reply was "no." The principal approved of the experiment, however, and during the summer singled out one teacher after another who might be at least slightly sympathetic: she visited their homes, trying to point out that this would be a great forward step, and gradually succeeded in persuading about six teachers. Then she went to each remaining member of the faculty and said, "We have a good nucleus. Won't you join?" A few replied that they would not, and were transferred; but a majority stayed. Now the arrangement has passed the experimental stage, and other schools are following suit. A citywide precedent of over one hundred years' standing has at last been broken.

A final area of achievement centers in vocational and trade education. The problem is well known. A Negro student says, "I'd like to be trained for a certain skilled job." The vocational adviser says, "No, you'd better not, because we can't find a job for you." In one city, however, an enlightened group of vocational leaders recently said, "If we are ever going to change this pattern of discrimination, now is the time to do it when we may anticipate an acute labor shortage." And so they trained many

Negro students for skilled jobs, at the same time sending emissaries to employers endeavoring to persuade them that Negroes should be hired. As far as could be determined, this is the only city of the seven where skilled Negroes were abundant when the need arose, and many thousands were hired. Whether the pattern will be broken permanently cannot be predicted, but it is certainly broken now.

IV

While the picture is by no means an altogether hopeful one, we are justified, then, in the generalization that it is far more hopeful than ever before in the history of American education. Myrdal talks about the spiral of discrimination and segregation. Once such a spiral begins, it rises, expands; the situation becomes increasingly vicious; and the more difficult it becomes to reverse the trend. Once however a reverse direction does start, there is likewise an acceleration—but this time away from segregation and discrimination toward integration and equalization. In all of these cities some effort of the second kind is being made in the schools—an effort which may indicate an acceleration of the spiral toward equality and freedom among all cultural groups.

Thus, one of the most familiar axioms of the social scientist may be demonstrated in some degree by this selective study. Where peoples of various cultures and races freely and genuinely associate, tensions and difficulties, prejudices and confusions dissolve. Where they do not associate, where they are isolated from one another, prejudice and conflict grow like a disease.

The American school is one of the promising signs in American life today, because the spiral is being reversed.

eighteen

EXPLORING AMERICA'S FUTURE

I

Imagine some sixty young men and women on the threshold of adult citizenship. Imagine them to be average Americans of many cultural and economic backgrounds, of a dozen varieties of academic training. Imagine most of them at the outset total strangers to one another, yet joining together around one magnetic purpose—a purpose at once so largely neglected hitherto by their schooling and so vital to them that they develop a common concern, mutual respect, and growing unity of interest. Imagine that they themselves largely determine together the step-by-step procedures by which this purpose is fulfilled.

Is such an enterprise possible in our typically mechanized and jammed institutions of higher learning?

II

The University of Minnesota, one of the three or four largest universities in the United States, has proved that it is entirely

practical. For several years, an experiment under the title, "Design for America," has been quietly developing to the stage where it is now fully approved by the division of general studies in the College of Science, Literature, and Arts.

Its central aim may be stated in a single question: "*If we young citizens gathered here had the power to do so, what kind of future society would we agree to build together?*"

For five days a week, one to several hours daily, over a three-month period, these students discuss, interview, criticize, listen, and investigate in the effort to find their own best answer to this challenging question. Two or three times each week, with the instructor acting as chairman, the entire group gathers together to exchange information and questions, listen to guest experts, and plan the schedule ahead.

At other times the group divides into subgroups of four or five, and under student leaders (usually no instructor is present) thresh out some specific phase of the guiding question. Whatever solutions they find are then presented to the central meetings for the critical consideration of all members.

When a member of a subgroup disagrees, his reasons are also aired before the larger group, and he may persuade the latter to his way of thinking. Always, however, the aim is to arrive at the largest possible consensus about every proposal, first within each sub-group, then within the whole class.

Thus, with the instructor a guide rather than a dogmatic authority, the group gradually fashions its blueprint for the future—a blueprint to which every participant has contributed.

Let us illustrate. One subgroup becomes excited about the arts related to city planning. It finds Lewis Mumford's *Culture of Cities* a fascinating resource. It arranges to show a remarkable movie, *The City*, before the entire class in order to contrast the ugly, chaotic "megalopolis" of today with the garden communities of tomorrow. It consults with architects and engineers on the University faculty. It draws detailed plans for the kind of Minneapolis and St. Paul that should be constructed in order to abolish slums, to provide sufficient traffic facilities, to give

every family its share of earth, sunlight, and adequate living space.

Another subgroup focuses upon new media of communication as forms of art. Controversial but crucial issues immediately arise. Should television patents become public property? Should censors, dominated by pressure groups, have the right to keep great dramas off the screen? If the radio were publicly owned, as in England, would people develop a taste for fewer soap operas and more symphonies? What changes shall we agree upon in the present system of control over these immensely powerful devices of our technological age?

Altogether, the class studies six major areas which enter into any comprehensive pattern of the future order: art, economics, politics, science, education, and human relations.

The economics area is treated early in the course on the assumption that, until evils like unemployment, chronic scarcity, and inflation are destroyed, we cannot hope for a sound political order, an adequate program of public education, or humane relations between races.

Such study is controversial. The class examines propaganda materials and hears speakers ranging from the National Association of Manufacturers to the Congress of Industrial Organizations; from the Communist Party to the Republican.

One subgroup studies the consumer cooperative movement; another, the Taft-Hartley law; another, the Tennessee Valley Authority. Every criticism or recommendation is brought before the entire class for appraisal and eventually for possible inclusion within the emerging design.

The political area, which is found to be inseparable from the economic, examines proposals for streamlining the federal government, for unicameral legislatures, for regional rather than state lines.

The education area gives students an opportunity—which they accept enthusiastically—to assess their own experience in the public schools and university, and to recommend changes in curriculum, teaching methods, and administration.

The science area investigates the social role of research experts, the constructive and destructive potentialities of atomic energy, the need for a national program of health and medical services.

The human-relations area probes into causes and cures of a social sickness like anti-Semitism; the role of women in modern society; anthropological evidence as to whether some races are really inferior to others; relations of the aged and young; economic cleavages between working people and the "leisure class."

III

Study of the six areas occupies about two-thirds of the total time. The remaining third devotes itself to *relational* aspects. Both the introductory and concluding weeks are devoted primarily to relationships among all six areas.

One objective of the introductory meetings is to preview the course and to elect a student planning committee which may modify the original agenda as it sees fit.

A second is to develop motivation by asking, "Why is it so important for America now to plan for the future?" This question calls for understanding of our recent history—the recurrence of war and depression; the rapid shift from a highly individualized society of seemingly infinite riches to one more and more interrelated, more and more limited in natural resources; the danger of expecting the future to take care of itself.

Still a third initial objective is the attempt to formulate together those universal values which should underlie the future order.* Once they have found some degree of working agreement about their values—health, literacy, creative work, belongingness, and perhaps a dozen others—students are better prepared to judge the strengths and weaknesses of conflicting proposals.

Concluding periods of the course, also concerned with relational objectives, concentrate upon review and synthesis. Each subgroup offers its own over-all plan for the future, correlating

* See Chapter V.

its chief proposals for each major area and then comparing these with proposals of other subgroups. Earlier omissions or differences between members are brought into the central meetings for reconsideration. There is a surprising degree of unanimity as to the need for far-reaching changes in virtually every department of modern society.

Some time is allowed, finally, for specific suggestions as to *how* the master plan may be achieved. Educational, political, and other strategies are outlined so that, as they go forth into community life, these young citizens may actually help to realize their goals.

IV

In replies to an anonymous questionnaire, students recommended that the course be expanded to three or four times its present three-month period. Despite the fact that eight or more visiting lecturers have participated during each presentation of the experiment, the students asked also for additional authorities of widely different viewpoints in each area.

The questionnaire indicated that for the overwhelming majority the project fills a gaping hole in undergraduate education, that most of the material is scarcely touched upon elsewhere in the curriculum, and that the project enables students to graduate with a clearer personal and social sense of direction. Scientific testing of two student groups also showed a statistically significant increase in information and in the forward-looking quality and consistency of social attitudes.

Introduction of a similar departure from the traditional curriculum might well be considered by other colleges and universities. Here is a way to help students cross subject-matter lines, to integrate the major fields of knowledge and experience—not as a superficial "survey" but as an organic and purposeful unity. Here is a chance to draw upon the study of history as an indispensable reservoir in meeting problems. Here is an opportunity to sensitize students to the crisis-culture in which we are now immersed, and hence to the urgency of preparing with utmost thoroughness for the period of both grim danger and humane

promise which lies ahead. Here is a means of providing richer opportunity by which students and teachers, as they learn from one another, can come to realize that no more reliable test of truth or goodness is available in a democracy than that which the widest possible consensus of citizens manages to fashion critically and openly together.

PART FOUR

Education

for

Cultural

Renaissance



nineteen

A NEW POLICY FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION

1 America and the world have entered a new period in their evolution—a period which creates unprecedented educational tasks because it generates unprecedented problems of great magnitude and danger. In an important sense, the responsibilities which education faces today and tomorrow are vastly more serious, more compelling, than after the first World War. Whether the schools will grasp their responsibility in time remains uncertain. That they have the obligation to do so is, however, utterly certain.

The teaching profession can and must, therefore, assume this obligation. It can and must prove to teachers, parents, students, administrators, and to the public, that never in history has civilization itself been in greater jeopardy. At the same time, it can and must demonstrate that the opportunity is available to empower education with hope and strength in behalf of a peaceful and humane world.

II

To examine and specify the main characteristics of this period should be one of the first lines of responsibility of the profession. That is, education on every level should seek to understand how fraught with tension, friction, and overt conflict are both our domestic and international relations. Nothing short of the utmost realism and forthrightness will help citizens—young and old alike—to recognize the depth, breadth, and obstinacy of contemporary problems. The habit of much education still to gloss over these problems because controversial or complex, still to ignore training in propaganda analysis and other techniques essential to their understanding, is proof enough that here alone the profession could make a tremendous contribution.

The complexities of the social, political, and economic relations of this period should not, moreover, be an excuse for denying that they gravitate around two fundamental and related facts. The first is the fact of an unstable and precarious economy, with its accompaniment of insecurity, inflation, its cycles of boom-and-bust. The second is the fact of national rivalry and hostility with their potential of atomic war.

Yet despite their indisputability, neither of these facts receives a fraction of the attention that education, ostensibly devoted to freedom and truth, should be giving them. To consider as to forget the economic events following World War I—the years of reckless prosperity and high living, of growing corporate power and disparities of wealth, followed by years of devastating depression, hunger, and fear. During the thirties some American educators became sufficiently concerned to voice their anger at this tragedy. Through the pages especially of one journal, *The Social Frontier*, and through the volumes especially of the Commission of the Social Studies (American Historical Association), they courageously analyzed the failures of a system which could cause such havoc, and they demanded thoroughgoing changes to eliminate those failures. Yet, as the depression waned and we became preoccupied with winning

World War II, even their voices softened to a whisper. At the present moment, no section of American education is calling attention strongly and clearly to the fact that the prosperity of this period is, in no essential way, different from that of the twenties—that again we are living and spending recklessly, allowing big business free rein, permitting further concentrations of economic power, building a top-heavy profit structure which, if it rises unchecked, will again inevitably crash.

In only one great respect—though a most crucial one—the present time differs from the twenties. While America seems to have learned little from its recent economic experience, other parts of the world have learned much. All over the earth powerful movements of the common people are demanding that these absurd and destructive fluctuations of the industrial system should end, that public controls be exerted over economic processes of sufficient strength and rationality to guarantee stability, much greater equalization of wealth, and the securities of a rising standard of living which the proven potentialities of abundance make entirely feasible. America has been too frequently out of step with the world. Yet her position is of such power and strategic importance that, if and when another and worse depression comes, she will shake and probably undermine many economic institutions elsewhere. Here, too, are facts which education ignores at its own peril and the world's.

The second fact—national rivalry and suspicion—receives, to be sure, a modicum of analysis in the schools. The roots of this terrifying reality, themselves largely economic, are seldom exposed, however, to the sunlight of honest scrutiny, and the solution of international order is too often treated both romantically and superficially. Once more the record of the past quarter-century is helpful: in the twenties, thousands of schools studied the League of Nations and propagandized in behalf of peace. But they usually failed to show how any League was bound to fail sooner or later so long as national sovereignty remained intact, so long as bitter competition for foreign markets and natural resources was practiced by the same nations which hypocritically paid lip-service to internationalism. Thus when

war came again, the disillusionment of millions of young men and women was in no small way the only clear effect of all efforts by education in behalf of peace.

And yet today it is important to inquire whether the only important "contribution" our schools are making is not, again, chiefly a repetition of the past. They may study and endorse the United Nations, to be sure; and that is helpful. But they seldom face the contradiction between high-minded objectives for all nations and the still dominant power of sovereignty of each nation. Students are taught that internationalism is desirable; they are also taught that the United States is supreme in its own right. They are taught that all countries must cooperate; they are also taught that we should keep the secret of atomic energy. They are taught that we should support the efforts of common peoples in other parts of the world to rise in power; they are also taught to be uncritical of a foreign policy which serves too often to thwart those efforts. They are taught the slogans of equality, freedom, and brotherhood; yet millions of them are taught (if in no other way than by failing to study alternatives) that the white race is superior to other races, that Christians are superior to Mohammedans or Jews.

III

The two great constructive purposes which should now govern the profession of teachers follow directly from this brief analysis. They are:

i. To channel the energies of education toward the reconstruction of the economic system—a system which should be geared with the increasing socializations and public controls now developing in England, Sweden, New Zealand, and other countries; a system in which national and international planning of production and distribution replaces the chaotic planlessness of traditional "free enterprise"; a system in which the interests, wants, and needs of the consumer dominate those of the producer; a system in which natural resources, such as coal and iron ore, are owned and controlled by the people; a system in which public corporations replace monopolistic enterprises and pri-

vately owned "public" utilities; a system in which federal authority is synchronized with decentralized regional and community administration; a system in which social security and a guaranteed annual wage sufficient to meet scientific standards of nourishment, shelter, clothing, health, recreation, and education are universalized; a system in which the majority of the people is the sovereign determinant of every basic economic policy.

2. To channel the energies of education toward the establishment of genuine international order—an order in which national sovereignty is always subordinate to international authority in all crucial issues affecting peace and security; an order therefore in which all weapons of war (including atomic energy, first of all) and police forces are finally brought under that authority; an order in which international economic planning of trade, resources, labor standards, and social security, is practiced parallel with the best cooperative practices of individual nations; an order in which all nationalities, races, and religions receive equal rights in its democratic control; an order in which "world citizenship" thus assumes at least equal status with national citizenship.

IV

These two great guiding principles involve a multitude of specific educational tasks to which the profession should now devote itself. Their precise delineation should involve every possible teacher, and the closest cooperation with all groups and forces which share generally in its purposes. In this statement of policy, we can only suggest what some of these tasks may be. We list them without elaboration or special concern for order of importance.

(a) There is desperate need for realistic materials regarding the economic system (the growth of corporate power is but one example), and for skill in penetrating the smokescreens of false propaganda set up by agencies of public opinion which benefit by concealment of the failures and injustices of the traditional system.

(b) There is call to develop consciousness in students, teach-

ers, administrators, and other citizens of the meaning and content of the values and norms which govern new economic, political, and cultural purposes. The import of a potent value like "self-realization" as a criterion for measuring the effectiveness of such economic proposals as labor-management committees should be fully explored and enunciated.

(c) In aligning against an unworkable economic system and unworkable nationalism, and with a workable system and workable internationalism, there is need to develop consciousness of a distinction between the convictions already held by those who take such sides and those who do not yet do so. This is necessary in order thereby to permit development of new educational techniques which avoid indoctrination of these convictions. The task is to experiment with techniques of learning through the dynamics of group development, not by superimposing pre-judgments. Only thus can majority rule eventually become rule by an informed majority who understand what they want and how, democratically, to get what they want. The school should become a center of experimentation in attaining communities of uncoerced consensus.

(d) There is rich opportunity for extensive educational practice in building detailed social designs which come to grips with problems arising in, for example, economic planning. Intensive study of experiments and institutions already underway, such as the postal system, the consumer cooperative movement, the social security program of America and Europe, are examples. Psychological problems such as motivations and incentives; political problems such as bureaucracy and reorganization of state and federal governments; social problems such as family life and the role of women; economic problems such as the place of private property in an increasingly socialized order—these are equally important.

(e) Pressing need exists for a new conception of group-centered discipline—intellectual, moral, and social—which can be developed in schools governed by the dominant purposes of a democratic society.

(f) Contributions of arts and sciences to the erection of the

new order should be examined and integrated with social studies. Community planning, the development of people's theaters and symphony orchestras, the social potentialities of science for health, home designing, communication and transportation, are but sample illustrations.

(g) The full import of the concept of "One World" and of "world citizenship" requires extended attention. Such complex problems as the retention of legitimate cultural variety by countries committed to international order should be explored, as should such issues as immigration, international educational and health standards, world-wide exchange of students and teachers. Study of the present structure of the United Nations should be supplemented by exploration of improvements needed to strengthen that structure both in regard to police power and socio-economic leadership.

(h) Equally extended attention should be paid to the unsolved problem of intercultural relations within nations. The status of minorities such as the Negro or Jew should be realistically evaluated, and the meaning of cultural equality more clearly understood and practiced.

(i) Close cooperation with educational movements of other countries, especially those working toward *more or less similar* objectives, is imperative.

V

In implementing these important recommendations, the profession should continue to support all kinds of educational experimentation. It should continue to emphasize "learning by doing," "community schools," "the integrated curriculum," "teacher-pupil planning," and other objectives of progressivism as these now become more widely accepted.

But such objectives are now subordinate, even while indispensable to, the more encompassing objectives impelled by a world in crisis. Faced by the alternatives of economic chaos and atomic war, on the one hand, of world-wide plenty and enforceable international order, on the other hand, the teaching

profession should become the clearest, most purposeful educational spokesman for the second of these alternatives.

To prove that education is *not* a mere mirror of dominant ideologies, *not* a device for bolstering outmoded economic systems and diseased nationalisms, but rather that education is a penetrating critic, dynamic leader, and imaginative re-creator which anticipates dangers *before* they crystallize into calamities, which helps simultaneously to reshape the culture of America and the world in accordance with the imperatives of this catalytic age—here is the supreme obligation of the teaching profession to the second half of our century.

ATOMIC ENERGY: THE SUPREME CHALLENGE TO EDUCATION

I

Although atomic energy has been one of the most discussed subjects in the world for the past few years, it has not been discussed sufficiently. It will not be discussed sufficiently so long as it remains the monstrous threat to the very existence of civilization which it is today. In some ways, indeed, that threat is more dangerous than it was in the summer of 1945, when the first bomb exploded in Hiroshima, killing or maiming some two hundred thousand men, women, and children. It is more dangerous because, with every passing day, the power of atomic energy is found to be more overwhelming and the means, by which it might be utilized to destroy the nerve centers of civilization in a few blows, more diabolically ingenious. Delay in determining clearly and unequivocally how atomic energy shall be controlled only invites an atomic armaments race between nations—a race which, like previous armaments races of history, leads again not only to the wasteful, immoral use of re-

sources that should have a constructive and moral use, but results in breeding more and more poisonous suspicion.

The present picture is surely not one to generate optimism. On the contrary, if we attempt to weigh negative and positive factors in the present world situation, we necessarily face the unpleasant fact of several profoundly disturbing aspects in international relations as well as in the internal status of certain nations.

In the first place, the United Nations has clearly not offered any great assurance thus far that the long tradition of nationalism will now be supplanted by a genuinely international policy of effective cooperation. Despite the good beginnings in San Francisco, meetings since then have been characterized much more conspicuously by suspicion, tension, and downright hostility than by a spirit of trust, confidence, and constructive achievement. Indeed, one cannot help recognizing a vicious circle at work in the relations particularly of the United States and the Soviet Union. These two nations have in many ways developed more and more unyielding rigidity and distrust. The most powerful organs of public opinion in the United States have engaged in attacking Russia's motives; it is as though they could scarcely wait for the last shot to be fired, closing World War II, before they were leveling their own guns of propaganda. Since then, we have chosen to continue a foreign policy which, in stubbornness, fear, and inflexibility in seeking means of conciliation, is matched only by the Soviet Union itself. Each side, by its conduct, has tended to stimulate deeper suspicion in the other.

On the negative side, in the second place, is the unhappy fact that the years just behind us have been characterized less by efforts to find a workable solution to the threat of atomic energy than by blundering and vacillation. It has been said that a group of high military officials, for example, attempted to force through Congress a bill which would have had the effect of keeping atomic energy secret under the exclusive control of the armed forces. Fortunately, this attempt was blocked by other

citizens who did not choose to see the United States become what Plato called a timocracy, a state ruled by a military elite.

II

Let us now consider one or two important positive factors. Of great importance is the militancy of democratically-minded citizens like those just mentioned. We should be improperly cynical were we to assert that there are not very strong forces who disapprove of the rigidity and blundering of our present foreign policy; who favor systematic planning of our economic life; and who wish atomic energy to be internationally and publicly controlled.

At the present time this positive factor, to be sure, is more largely expressed in concern than crystallized in achievement. A widely discussed essay has pointed out that, with explosion of the atomic bomb, some of the most comfortable traditions of modern civilization likewise exploded. National sovereignty, particularly, is as obsolete today as would be a system of production by handicrafts. People now use the term "A.A." (atomic age) as a more accurate designation of the calendar than "A.D." Never before in history, in all probability, have as many people at the same time so clearly agreed upon one fact: they know, and often far better than do dignitaries in places of pontifical authority, that unless we find ways this time of guaranteeing peace, we are confronting our literal doom.

For these reasons and others, education should assume the greatest possible responsibility in coping with this vast problem. This is not to say that education, as another positive factor of great importance, is in itself a sufficient solution. We have too frequently tended to drop our unsolved problems into a bottomless barrel vaguely labeled "education" and expected somehow a miraculous solution to emerge. Actually, education becomes a constructive force only when it fuses with the economic, political, socially creative forces of the culture—when it is of the very stuff of the growing, struggling life of every small and large community. Yet, however effective it can and should become, we would plead for a more modest judgment

of the present power of education. Paradoxically, we teachers, students, and parents become much stronger as we estimate more accurately our limitations.

While the contributions that education, so evaluated, could make are many, this discussion confines itself to three suggestions which deal primarily with the role of science in education.

III

The first takes us briefly, much too briefly to avoid superficiality, into the philosophy of science. By the philosophy of science, we mean the study primarily of those premises which, consciously or unconsciously, underlie physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, and all other fields coming within the compass of experimental investigation.*

Now the philosophy which has dominated much of our scientific thinking for a long time has imagined a picture of the world as a kind of great orderly machine running on an exact schedule according to a fixed, quantitative process of causes and effects. Every part is related in a predetermined manner to every other part, the whole structure being governed accordingly by laws which are *already there* in nature. The role of the scientist, for this philosophy, is roughly like that of a dexterous stage hand: his chief function is to pull back a curtain from nature, revealing on the stage of the universe the mechanical perfection of things in all their magnificent orderliness. The laws which govern this fixed universe are there waiting to be observed, reflected by the mind, and scrupulously obeyed.

Within the past fifty or so years, however, a new philosophy of science has been developing. Motivation for it came in no small part from the work of great scientists like Einstein who, for the first time in centuries, dared to challenge the assumed finality of such laws of nature as Newton's law of gravitation—indeed, the whole mechanistic conception of the universe which we associate with Newton. At the same time, scientists of philosophic bent began to develop a theory which now conceives the function of science, not primarily as a passive beholder of pre-

* See Chapter VI.

existent laws and regularities, but rather as a careful and active manipulator. The term, "operationalism," suggests this newer approach: science becomes a highly refined instrument for operating upon and cooperating with nature, of effecting adjustments and readjustments through which man may more effectively control nature.

The educational implications of these two viewpoints are astonishing. Hitherto, the teaching of science, strongly influenced by the mechanistic philosophy, has tended to develop in the young an attitude of acquiescence, of almost fatalistic subjection to overwhelming forces and laws. On the other hand, the operational approach, which begins to undergird the teaching of science in our more experimental schools, develops the attitude that men can become the masters, rather than remain the servants, of nature. To paraphrase a famous dictum about history by one of our great nineteenth-century thinkers, Karl Marx, the operational philosophy of science means, above all, that man makes science; science does not make man.

If we relate this second position to the chief issue before us here, what we need is the kind of scientific teaching which encourages the conviction that atomic energy, far from being necessarily a force which will inevitably destroy us, is a means to increased cooperation between nature and man. Atomic energy can be used just as well for constructive as for destructive purposes. Unless our schools do their share to inculcate a universal conviction that we must control atomic energy rather than allow it to control us, they will have failed tragically in their duty.

IV

A second suggestion follows from the first. Scientists of all kinds should become more than scientists: they should become citizens deeply concerned for the social import of their achievements. Happily, the recent pronouncements of scientists engaged in atomic research are omens that this kind of concern is increasing. For example, a large group of physicists who worked at Los Alamos, one of the centers of atomic research, have publicly stated that unless a way is found without delay to place

atomic energy under public control, we may anticipate the destruction not only of other nations, but of our own as well.

It is not our intention here to plead for any modification of the scientist's integrity to the canons of research. We are saying, with the thinker and poet, Archibald MacLeish, that unless artists and scientists take an active part in the social struggles of our critical age they are irresponsible. Indeed, they are opening the way to wrecking not only economic and political institutions but the very creative freedom which is essential to scientific and artistic achievement.

The kind of responsibility needed is exemplified in a report to the American Secretary of State by a committee of scientists and citizens. The report recommends a plan for international control of atomic energy. Let us summarize its salient points.

First, it rejects as inadequate any plan limited to inspection of atomic experimental centers of the several nations. It states that such inspection would fail to prevent subterfuge and suspicion. Second, the report rejects continued secrecy as a policy, for it recognizes that the principles of nuclear physics are already known throughout the world and therefore that almost any nation, given a little time, can in all probability succeed in duplicating the achievements of the United States. In fact, it is quite possible that other nations are already well on the way toward equaling or exceeding our investigations while we continue to debate the really absurd question of whether the secret should be revealed. Third, and more constructively, it is recommended that all "dangerous" experimentation (which is distinguishable to a considerable extent from "non-dangerous") should be under control of an international atomic energy authority in turn subject to the authority of the United Nations. All experimentation, moreover, should look to the constructive potentialities of atomic energy. Fourth, and by all odds the key proposal, is this: since in the foreseeable future atomic bombs can be made only with the use of two elements (thorium and uranium) and since the deposits of these elements are already largely known, therefore these deposits should come under absolute control of the same international authority. If other

deposits are discovered, they, too, should come under that control.

This report is an example, at its best, of the social responsibility of science and of the inextricable relation of science and society. It is the kind of attitude which all citizens, not merely the professional scientist, should assume. For science is also *their* legitimate concern.

V

A third suggestion, emerging from the second, is that science in the schools be radically reorganized to place its vastly important methods and achievements in direct relation to the interests and problems of daily living.

The traditional teaching of physics, chemistry, and other sciences is inadequate. The various fields of science have been taught as separate, compartmentalized bodies of knowledge without regard either for their relations to one another or for their relations to social and cultural experience. The average student is not going to be a scientist, and the science he studies should be primarily, therefore, in the form of problems selected from his familiar environment with constant concern for interrelationships of the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the arts.

A modest illustration of what we mean is afforded by an experiment in a small Minnesota high school, in which some fifty boys and girls, seventeen and eighteen years of age, spent nearly five months, two hours a day, five days a week, seeking an answer to the question, "If we had the power, what kind of blueprints would we like to see drawn to guide us in the reconstruction of our culture?" In their search, these young Americans turned to the political thinker, to the economist, to the artist, to the educator, and to the scientist himself. Wherever they could get help, they drew upon the resources of these and still other fields. They asked scientists, "What have you already discovered that would make people more healthy, that would make our cities more efficient and harmonious?" and so on. Rather to their surprise, they uncovered a host of scientific achievements

that have not thus far been utilized, partly because it is not always profitable to do so. Just one example: they found that science already knows fairly well how to heat houses practically by sunlight, a method that would revolutionize the heating systems now in use and would at the same time, if properly studied, illustrate the operation of basic principles of physics.

Such an operational approach to science puts into dynamic operation the second of the two philosophies earlier sketched. With regard to atomic energy itself, this kind of learning emphasizes the constructive uses of such energy for curing disease, for generating power, perhaps for revolutionizing our entire technology. Study of atomic energy is an especially apt illustration, because it taps the direct interests of people everywhere. Fission, chain reaction, heavy nuclei, and light nuclei are marvelous avenues to teaching not less but more basic science. They are means by which science assumes significant meaning for the lives of ordinary people upon whom, after all, falls the final and perhaps fatal choice of whether science is to control them or they, science.

twenty one

THE HUMAN ROOTS OF WORLD ORDER

Despite the glibness with which many of us now swear allegiance to the ideal of a world order—an order crossing all national lines and uniting all governments under one strong international authority—the fact is that we often do disservice to this ideal. For we fail to face squarely the mountainous obstacles in the path of its achievement, and thus to develop strategies sufficiently powerful to overcome them. We believe that somehow we can continue to support the hoary institution of national autonomy and at the same moment, rather by magic than by logic, also support world citizenship. We look upon the peoples of foreign lands, of various races and customs, as strangely different from (if not often inferior to) ourselves; at the same time, we speak of the "brotherhood" and "equality" of all men.

Now it is this last disservice—this confusion and inconsist-

ency—about the nature of the earth's peoples that we shall examine here. The issue may be stated more sharply. One of the oldest and most potent arguments against the workability of any kind of social institution embracing diverse groups is that the run of human beings are too unlike, too pugnacious, too stubborn, too selfish, or simply too stupid and sheeplike to join together cooperatively and democratically for any length of time. Indeed, it is upon just this kind of argument that kings have justified absolute power over their subjects; that races have been kept in subjection; that serfs and peasants have been denied the right of full political participation; and that, today in the organization and operation of most industrial enterprises, a few men still control many men.

No wonder, then, that beneath much of the verbal good will toward internationalism lies a pervading skepticism that, people being what they are, democratic world order is hopelessly unrealistic: the dream of starry-eyed, soft-minded idealists—and college professors! Should such a world order actually come close enough to realization to threaten the power of those who benefit by national divisions, we shall hear more and more doubts, more and more attacks upon the patriotism, practicality, even the sanity of internationalists. We shall hear the voices of twentieth-century Alexander Hamiltons speaking—no longer, to be sure, of the people of America alone—but of those of India, China, Russia, Africa; and saying of them, as the Hamiltons of all times have said in their own idiom, "Your people, sir, are a beast."

Can we answer these persuasive voices? We can. To do so convincingly, however, will take relentless effort, and even then there is no assurance of success. If the schools are to do their share toward the success that is still possible, and surely desirable, they will have to throw much of the baggage of routine curricula on the junk heap to make room for more imperative tasks. They will have to substitute—to take one instance—careful study in problems of cultural anthropology for the wasteful of the pre-college or college student's program, at the same

time that it usually fails to teach him either how to use these languages or to understand the countries where they are important. By as many routes as possible, public schools alive to their responsibility will approach the peoples of every part of the globe, will enter into the feelings, thoughts, struggles, hopes of boys and girls, men and women, of every race, creed, class, caste, nationality. Only as American citizens come to discover *what human beings everywhere are really like*—and only as citizens of other countries similarly come to understand Americans—can we honestly hope to weaken the blockages of mutual suspicion and falsification so that world order can be constructed on a sound *human* foundation.

This is not to say, of course, that understanding of common peoples in all parts of the world will in itself assure such an order. Powerful organization by majorities of these same peoples will be equally essential. It is also entirely possible that military or economic forces in control of most nations will prevent us, in any case, from coming effectively together. Or, more precisely, their dynamos of public opinion may succeed so well in shaping our attitudes that we develop only distorted stereotypes of people they do not want us to like. This seems to be what the Russian schools and newspapers are doing to us Americans now. Likewise, this is what American schools and newspapers seem to be doing to the Russians.

Difficulties then are very great, and we only deceive ourselves if we underestimate them. Nevertheless, we are equally deceptive if we succumb to defeat at the outset by denying that there is anything at all that we can do. On the contrary, there is much—so much that, again speaking educationally, it is doubtful whether a single American school is now measuring up to its own optimum capacity. We return therefore to the central question before us: what can we learn about the peoples of the earth that will help us to support, and to defend against its enemies, the imperative goal of an international association of these peoples—a democratic association which, representative of and controlled by them, will be just as strong and good as they are strong and good?

II

Perhaps the most important answer to this question is that, with all their differences, races and nationalities everywhere possess similar endowments. On this score, at least, those of our century who believe in the innate inferiority of some, and the innate superiority of others, deserve to be excused far less readily than those who, in centuries past, held such a belief. Whereas the latter was completely untested, today it has been thoroughly tested—and found false. Anthropologists and social psychologists are agreed that, both biologically and psychologically, no scientific basis whatever exists for the view that large human groups are above or below others in their inherent structures or capacities. Given opportunity for comparable nourishment, comparable medical care, comparable education, the typical Chinese coolie from Nanking is equal in energy, muscle, passion, or intelligence, to the typical American clerk from Saginaw.

To conclude that a democratic world order is entirely practical from such evidence alone would, however, glaringly beg the question. While it is of utmost importance that every student know the elementary facts of racial science, it is equally important for him to know how widely societies differ in comparable opportunity. Chinese coolies are not equal to American clerks precisely because, much too often, they are woefully undernourished, medically neglected, totally illiterate. The problem before us thus requires further consideration: granting the inherent similarities of peoples, are not the differences generated by environments still too wide to permit common understanding and common unity?

Although the answer here is more complicated, part at least is already available, and surely revealing. However diversified the customs and habits of peoples, however primitive or advanced a culture, each possesses an astonishing array of common denominators—such an array, in fact, as to give fresh significance to the old phrase, *one human race*. Consider a fascinating

list of these common denominators as compiled by the anthropologist, Professor George P. Murdock:

age-grading, athletic sports, bodily adornment, calendar, cleanliness training, community organization, cooking, cooperative labor, cosmology, courtship, dancing, decorative art, divination, division of labor, dream interpretation, education, eschatology, ethics, ethnobotany, etiquette, faith healing, family, feasting, fire making, folklore, food taboos, funeral rites, games, gestures, gift giving, government, greetings, hair styles, hospitality, housing, hygiene, incest taboos, inheritance rules, joking, kin-groups, kinship nomenclature, language, law, luck superstitions, magic, marriage, meal-times, medicine, modesty concerning natural functions, mourning, music, mythology, numerals, obstetrics, penal sanctions, personal names, population policy, postnatal care, pregnancy usages, property rights, propitiation of supernatural beings, puberty customs, religious ritual, residence rules, sexual restrictions, soul concepts, status differentiation, surgery, tool making, trade, visiting, weaning, and weather control.*

If we search through this partial list for further clues to our central problem, and if we translate nouns into verbs which suggest what people *do*, it would seem that, among other things, they generally make love; they nourish themselves; they take care of their bodies; they play; they work, they learn; they worship; they create esthetically; they make rules; they sorrow; they communicate; they govern; they shelter and clothe themselves; they protect one another; they count; they possess; they visit and trade; they cooperate and organize. Whether they do these and other things largely because they are endowed with similar drives seeking similar satisfactions, or whether they do them mainly because of habit and social conditioning, is irrelevant to our problem here. The important thing is that, whatever the causes, they *do* them, and that we can observe them by the ways people act as people live—in short, by practical effects.

Thus, here too we are supported overwhelmingly in any conviction we may hold that world order is now indispensable. For

* Quoted from R. Linton (ed.), *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*, by permission of the Columbia University Press.

world order, in our time, can alone guarantee that these effects—the largest quantity and richest quality of what people everywhere have most widely done—can continue to be done in the future.

We offer two main reasons. In the first place, the things people wish most to do require that they *live*, and they cannot at the same time both live and be destroyed. People want peace, not so much for the sake of peace as such, but in order that they can better create, protect, communicate, love, associate. And though many millions have yet to learn, increasing millions have already learned that peace is not possible—certainly not in an age of atomic and bacterial bombs—so long as any nation is the supreme judge of itself, so long as no coercive power is stronger than itself.

And, in the second place, people cannot live, not in the ways they have sought to live, while they are continually threatened by depression, starvation, by the scourges and epidemics which accompany chronic unemployment, insecurity, exploitation. Hence a world order is likewise in accord with what people want to do because it alone is now capable of controlling economic processes on the planetary scale necessary to assure adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical care, education, play, work. Bitter and ruthless competition between nations for raw materials like oil, for new markets, for monopoly control of commodities ranging all the way from matches to aluminum—such *competition*, in our shrinking earth, is another word for *friction*; and friction, continued long and hard enough, produces *conflagration*. Hence again, growing numbers are indignantly declaring that enforceable and representative international authority alone can assure not only security but the peace which is its partner.

III

Numerous problems, tangential to our central one, obviously remain for consideration by any program of education concerned with the human roots of such a world order. One is the old but still perplexing issue of cultural diversity within world unity:

how, if at all, shall we maintain and encourage the abundant contributions of distinctive races, religions, countries, while yet embracing them within a larger *intercultural* whole? A second is the question of why, if people possess such great common denominators as we have noted, they continue to fear and fight one another—a question which, though inviting complex answers, should lead us solemnly to consider whether in our time it is ordinary citizens who usually desire to fear and fight, or whether it is economical, political, military rulers who delude or force them into doing so. A final question is how to develop a dynamic program of transglobal communication and appreciation: if world-minded Americans particularly are not to impose their own preferred patterns of the good life *upon* others, but to achieve a pattern which interpenetrates fully *with* others, then we have the huge undertaking of turning an agency like UNESCO from a merely advisory body into a World Education Authority backed by resources commensurate with its urgent obligations.

Meanwhile, at least this much is already clear. Just as the enemies of democracy have from Plato onward insisted that people are incompetent to govern themselves on a national plane, so now they insist, ever more shrilly, that people cannot possibly do so on an *international* plane. Yet, with all the errors and fumbling of national democracy, its enemies have too often been shown to be wrong.

They can be wrong again. We fast approach a junction of history where either a world order is established and ruled by ordinary people, or there may be no people to rule. And who, after all, can we better trust to govern? Those who now try to keep the world broken into pieces, with wars and depressions their one sure dividend? Or those who, in all lands, of all skins, of all languages, have for milleniums longed for and sometimes won the chance to attain such fulfillment of their powers as range alphabetically all the way from "age-grading" through "hospitality" to "weather control"?

twenty two

DESIGN FOR A CURRICULUM

I

That the theory underlying this volume is already beginning to affect the level of practice could be illustrated in a great variety of ways. Many individual teachers, and some institutions, already subscribe to at least certain of its principles—and this is true perhaps even more in parts of the world where the new orientation is taking hold in economic and political spheres. The striking experience of England with workers' education is one instance. In America, we have shown by several examples in Part Three how reconstructionist ideas, always closely related with and indebted to progressivist ideas, are being translated into workers' education, intercultural education, and future-centered experiments in the curriculum.

Nevertheless, no one can deny that such experiments are still scattered and sometimes ambiguous in meaning. There is need for proposals of a more far-reaching and comprehensive kind—

proposals which would reconstruct the whole program of education from top to bottom. In this chapter, therefore, we shall carry further the kind of initial steps suggested by the "Design for America" experiment in Chapter XVIII, and by the proposed policy for the profession in Chapter XIX. The blueprint we shall sketch is, of course, only one of many possible plans. Also, it is to be regarded as flexible—always subject to modification in the light of experience, and especially of cooperative planning by students, teachers, parents. Nevertheless it provides the kind of definiteness of purpose and design which, we have been contending, public education thus far too often lacks.

What, then, is our proposal? In essence it is that *the hub of every curriculum be the study of the structure and operation of reconstructed democracy itself*. This means, not that other important areas of study are to be neglected, but that these be related to the hub as spokes are in a wheel. Let us concentrate upon the junior college (which we shall conceive as running from the present high school junior year through the present sophomore college year). During each year one central unit is devoted to one key aspect of a reorganized democracy. Each unit points toward a final unit in the last semester of the senior year where the aim is to integrate each part into a panoramic view of the whole society.

II

Because in every type of society the economic area is crucial to the rest, the freshman year is devoted to analysis of the systematized processes essential to the producing, consuming, and transporting phases of industrial and agricultural life. Such study must obviously remain on a comparatively simple plane, and its success can be judged in the long run by the success both of preparation on elementary levels and in the later achievements of higher levels. Nevertheless, given stimulating but by no means impossible conditions, boys and girls of about sixteen years can and should understand the elementary attributes of a system where economic planning, for example, is indispensable.

Study and action proceed from key questions, such as "How

would the output of publicly operated electric power be estimated so that it balances with a public demand for that power over a given time?" "How sound is the program of consumer cooperatives operated on a nation-wide basis?" "As and if private collectivities become publicly owned, how shall reimbursement to previous owners be made?" "How are salaries and wages to be equitably adjusted to varying skills and demands in the new economy?" "What limitations should be placed upon private property and wealth in a more socialized democracy?" "What reorientation is necessary toward the virtue of saving when social responsibility for old age and unemployment is largely assumed by the service state?"

In dealing with problems of this kind—problems, be it noted, which are largely neglected by typical schools—the aim always is to utilize knowledge of actual practices in America and in Europe. But while the economic unit grounds itself on evidence and the most thoughtful proposals of experts, every effort is made also to invigorate the social imaginations of students so that they themselves contribute suggestions for the consideration of fellow students and instructors.

This unit illustrates a number of further proposals in the way it cooperates with other units. We note four of these proposals.

First, in schools where the economic sphere is studied simultaneously in a number of sections, the students of each section submit conclusions and recommendations to students of other sections for criticism or approval.

Second, their own conclusions, plus old problems and issues for which they do not find acceptable answers, or new problems and issues which they themselves raise, are pooled at the close of the year for the use of students in the following year. Thus no two years are ever identical, but rather take on a strongly inductive and evolutionary character.

Third, students of the economics unit frequently seek the assistance of second, third, or fourth year units. In considering a question like centralization, a student committee may be elected by the class to visit a unit in politics for the purpose of obtaining help. Again, an instructor or a committee from the latter may

be invited to visit the economics unit. Integration of the curriculum is therefore vertical as well as horizontal.

Fourth, the spokes of the wheel (that is, the other studies being pursued by each class of students) are integrated with the hub. In the first year a course in *drawing*, let us say, supplies diagrams and blueprints for a particular plan of commodity distribution. A course in *history* concerns itself with the development of business enterprise; it notes how such development has brought both maladjustments which now demand correction, and technological achievements which must be freshly utilized. A course in *English* becomes a tool in learning how to read literature of importance to the economic unit, or in learning how to express in writing one's criticisms or interpretation of the material of that unit. As in the cooperation between sections of the same "hub" unit of one year, or between the several "hub" units of all four years, here too cooperation is constant: teachers from various "spoke" studies work with teachers of the "hub" study, often joining classes together for discussion, activity, demonstration.

The plan of next year's work, moreover, is laid out afresh at the close of each year by the entire corps of teachers, together with committees of students from the various courses. Parents are also frequently consulted. But in no case is the plan shaped so rigidly as to preclude modification during actual operation.

III

The same general design applies to each of the succeeding three years. The second year unit may concern itself with a reconstructed democracy in its structure and functioning as a political order. But since politics cannot possibly ignore the material of economics, there is a constant utilization of material and problems from the economics unit, both as students have come to understand it by their previous studies, and as they feel impelled to seek the assistance of first-year students in a specific question. The politics unit concerns itself particularly with underlying meanings and practical problems raised by the principle of majority rule and minority rights—what

changes, for example, are necessary in the present system of national representative government and the United Nations if such control is to be efficient and effective.

The third year unit is devoted to what may be called the "cultural" sphere. Here students are concerned with the broader aspects of social life as it is crucially affected by the reconstruction of economic and political institutions. One such aspect is *education* itself: to take but one instance, the role of adult education in a social order where, according to sociologists, age-levels will be increasingly older than today. Another aspect is *health*, which leads to such controversial but pressing questions as *socialized medicine*: what it means; what objections are raised to it; what arguments are offered for it. *Art, religion, and science* are still other important areas which invite both study of present experiments and acquaintance with the proposals of socially imaginative artists, theologians, and scientists. "Spoke" studies, ranging all the way from introductory physics and biology to music and the dance, are related to the "hub" during this year.

The fourth year is devoted to two consecutive units. The first semester focuses upon what, again broadly, we may entitle the "psychological" sphere. One example, the kind of incentives which should largely replace the incentives of old-fashioned competitive individualism, at once reveals the inextricability of the psychological from the economic, political, social. Thus by the time the psychological unit is reached many of its principal problems will already have been touched upon—in some instances, tentatively answered. Nevertheless, there is such need here for more concentrated concern that it challenges every resource of the sciences of human nature. The difficult question of the relations and distinctions between needs and wants; the place of psychological testing in determining ability and aptitude; readjustments in home and marriage; child development and mental health; the function of rewards and punishments; the social control of crime and delinquency—these are typical. The specific significance of the general principle of self-realization* is clearly a central question underlying this unit.

* See Chapter V.

The final semester is an over-all synthesis of the four preceding units—that is, of the economic, political, cultural, and psychological spheres in their encompassing relationships. This unit therefore calls for a "central seminar" in which instructors from each "hub" unit, as well as occasionally from "spoke" studies, join together with fourth-year students as cooperative painters of the social mural. Students representing earlier units may also at times participate in this integrating unit, not only to contribute segments to the whole design, but also perhaps to emphasize its problematic aspects. The last unit does not, in other words, pretend to offer final solutions to every earlier question. It does try as far as social consensus permits to be genuinely reconstructive in a positive sense. But it seeks also to be honest in its recognition of unsolved issues, and to leave a record of these to be considered by succeeding classes.

We have already said that just as first-year students pursue studies and activities tangential to the economic unit, so also do they in each of the other three years. Not all students, of course, take the same "spoke" subjects; what they take depends upon their aptitudes and their occupational plans. Vocational guidance is, then, vitally important; but it is guidance not so exclusively toward jobs and professions circumscribed by traditional patterns as toward those opening, or capable of being opened, within the emerging order. Numerous governmental services are one illustration. Management of publicly-owned utilities, consumers' cooperatives, the expanding field of public health, are others.

One of the most important "spoke" subjects is the intensive study of alternative social orders. A full unit is offered in fascism; another in communism and socialism. Such units deal constantly with differences and points of similarity, if any, between themselves and a reconstructed democracy—their purpose being, first, to enable us to profit by mistakes and accomplishments; second, to understand the place of America in our modern world; third, to subject our own social hypotheses to thoroughgoing criticism and contrast. These systems and movements, then, are not studied simply as economic or political

systems, nor for their own sake, but as challenging philosophies of life.

Courses in foreign language, while by no means as heavily required as hitherto, take on a new significance. Far from being learned for habits of "mental discipline," they must be elected by some young citizens because it is now supremely important that we understand the peoples of the earth as well as what other governments have done or are doing. German, French, Spanish, are needed for this purpose, but so too are languages like Japanese and Russian which now acquire an obvious new importance for international relations.

IV

The junior college, which is already replacing the old four-year curriculum of secondary education in some places, is the logical center of the proposed design. Students between sixteen and twenty years are, or at least are capable of being, young adults. They are on the threshold of citizenship, marriage, vocation. To them the issues of society are or could be made very real. Moreover, if the elementary schools are reasonably successful in developing concern with important issues of contemporary society, junior college students can and should be sufficiently mature to participate effectively in such units as we have described. Finally, the junior college will probably include a larger and larger proportion of the young adult population. If the needed order must first of all be understood by those who are soon to be most responsible as citizens for blocking or backing its accomplishment, the heart of the new program should unquestionably center in the junior college.

But this does not mean that other levels of education remain untouched. On the contrary, their significance and program are also profoundly altered. Thus elementary schools, too, should be organized at least indirectly in terms of the objectives typified most directly by the junior college.

In order for these objectives to be realized, one general prerequisite must in the fullest sense of the word be carried into practice on lower levels. This is the development of interests

and attitudes, the encouragement of children in every possible way to do the things which they most want to do in terms of their propensities, their opportunities, and their social relationships. If self-realization is, as we have said, the ultimate encompassing value of democracy, if it is not to be a mere verbalism, then it must begin to flower as early as possible in life. If it does not, it becomes stunted or paralyzed by lack of nourishment and growth. This means, above all, that good education on every level is *active* education: learning through *experience* with what we learn is imperative and continuous.

Interests, however, also require for their expression the media of skills, of knowledge, and the capacity to look upon ourselves and our environment analytically. Hence the early years have the task of teaching how to read, to write, and to compute. They have the task of teaching certain elementary facts about society and nature, which every person must respect—the simple laws of traffic, let us say, or rules of sanitation.* They have the task of developing interests which, if not artificial, cannot help but mean also the development of critical habits of thinking in relation to these interests. They have the task of experience in group learning, social cooperation, decision-making. Self-realization is never an automatic process; it is arduous and energetic. It requires an awareness of difficulties and obstacles present both in the environment without and the self within. In these times of stress and strain, moreover, the problematic qualities of life are especially important; it becomes one of the school's responsibilities, not to conceal their existence by a curtain of superficial optimism, but to cultivate criticism as organic with self-realization itself. Interest and puzzlement are complementary qualities of human nature.

But interests properly synchronized with skills, essential knowledge, and analytical attitudes, may also lead straight to an eventual if naive curiosity on the part of growing children about patterns of living which will enable them to accomplish what they desire. As they learn to think, read, communicate, and associate in terms of the genuine problems and alternative

* See Chapter X.

choices with which society is now confronted, it will be increasingly clear to them not only that old patterns no longer provide sufficient solutions but that new patterns should be sought. Boys and girls of twelve or fourteen can easily learn, for example, that sound physical health—surely an important ingredient of self-realization in a democracy—is not now the possession of millions of citizens. And since they can be expected to appreciate that such a possession is important to themselves and to everyone like them, they can also be expected to wonder about the causes and then the programs which offer promise of correction.

The entire plan of education from the second to the sixteenth year, in short, is orientated toward a slowly articulated and maturing demand for and experience with ends which, when implemented by institutions and operations, offer promise of dissolving the frustrations, crumbling the blocks, between interest and fulfillment. Definite reference to a reorganized democracy as the most plausible contemporary embodiment of these ends is then by no means totally ignored until youngsters reach the junior college. Very early in the grades, although it is true that learning is weighted at other points, suggestions of social reconstruction are occasionally introduced; and as children move nearer and nearer their sixteenth year, more and more emphasis may be placed upon such suggestions.

The point is that there is no dualism whatever between lower and higher levels. Where the whole plan of education is governed by a purposeful criterion, teachers, parents, and administrators find a fresh incentive to bring elementary schools into functional relationship with secondary schools. Thus there is every reason why the early years should be concerned not merely with skills and facts, or with present interests, but with conscious anticipation of the older years and so ultimately with the concrete achievement of a reconstructed democratic culture.

V

Since in the higher learning the same purposes prevail, whatever differences we shall now mention between it and lower

levels are no more differences of kind than they are between junior colleges and elementary schools.

The college and university are, however, equipped to deal with technical, abstract proposals and difficulties of present and future society to a degree impossible elsewhere in education. Its experts and specialists, working more often in collaboration than has been customary, probe into the darker recesses of the economic, political, psychological, philosophical spheres. Certain problems to be attacked at the university level are suggested repeatedly by the junior college, especially in its fourth year. At the same time, university research becomes a major resource of evidence and hypotheses for all the "hub" units of the junior college. Thus one finds just as much reason for constant interdependence between the junior college and university levels of education as between the two lower levels.

The university also becomes the center for professional training. Yet it does so, not merely in ways conventional today, but in the significant *added* ways of developing leaders for the struggle to establish a world-wide, majority-controlled order. A host of new opportunities at once appears in the light of this purpose: labor leaders and public officers trained in the conception of the "service" state; physicians educated, not only in medicine, but in the problems and practices of social health; engineers who learn how to integrate technological processes; architects and other artists alert to new types of community planning; teachers qualified to work in schools designed on a future-centered foundation. Some of these opportunities are already opening. It is safe to say that they will open much more rapidly as leaders are trained to demonstrate their value and necessity.

Still another contribution of the university is to provide a modern curriculum for the undergraduate who wishes to study only a brief time beyond the junior college before completing his education or going into professional training. This curriculum may be close to that of the junior college in its design, but at once more thorough and more specialized.* Problems of

* See "Design for a Curriculum," by F. Ballaine, T. Brameld, and W. Thomas, *Educational Forum*, Vol. 3, No. 2.

the economics and other "hub" units in the junior college are not, after all, subjected to intensive analysis. On higher levels, therefore, economic problems may be refined and enlarged; so too may those of the political, cultural, and psychological spheres. Some issues, such as the meaning and place of religion in a more humanized culture, can be given only limited attention in the earlier years. In the university, however, a semester "hub" unit can profitably be devoted to this controversial field—the central question being what reorganization, if any, of present practices and beliefs would enable religion to contribute more vitally to world civilization.

"Spoke" studies are also more specialized. A tool subject such as the Japanese or Russian language is obviously bound to be more in demand in the university than in the junior college, not merely because it is difficult, but because it is of primary use to experts who expect to make technical studies abroad. Similarly, the undergraduate curriculum of the university features pre-professional courses designed for their definite bearing especially upon professions aiming toward new patterns of service and achievement. Maximum cross-fertilization of departments, experts, and students, and a semester of panoramic integration to be given at the end of the undergraduate program, should be carried over from the junior college plan.

Adult education, finally, should have a conspicuous place in our proposed program. Indeed, the need of reaching the adult population, particularly working people,* is so strategic that even before education can make any changes of significance the need must be considered and reconsidered by parents and voters everywhere. Only if they are given opportunity to understand the importance of a reconstructed democracy in relation to their own lives will they be likely to support, not only an extensive adult program, but a thorough rehabilitation of the entire school system. As the movement gains in momentum, moreover, units in democratic designing can be offered to adults themselves and correlated again with instrumental subjects.

* See Chapters XIV and XV.

VI

While many details and questions concerning the general plan must be omitted from consideration here, one final point deserves to be made. The proposed curriculum does not in the slightest degree pretend to be novel for the sake of novelty. On the contrary, we should consider as deliberately and fully as possible the contributions and methods, on the one hand, of contemporary American schools and, on the other hand, of our most influential educational theories. No proposal for so important or universal an institution as the public school deserves attention if we do not consider them. Hence any design should be concerned both with the past and present; it should be respectful of the classics, certainly of history; it recognizes the value of tool subjects, of learning certain facts and basic skills. It accepts the threefold organization of the schools into primary, secondary, and higher institutions. In common with a large number of recent proposals, it advocates the social studies as the core of the curriculum.

Where it differs at these and other points is, however, in what we may call the *educational center of gravity*. The center of gravity is shifted; and this alone justifies any claim to a reorientation for public education. What the shift means, of course, is again directly dependent upon dangers and promises involved in this age of crisis. The danger is that our culture will disintegrate or collapse from the pressures now exerted upon it. The promise is that, provided they can be brought under democratic control, our mighty resources especially of technology, may instead provide for America and the world an unprecedented epoch of cooperation and abundance. Such a design as we propose aims to assess both our liabilities and assets, to consider the means by which our assets may be more richly released and distributed, and to engender a belief in ourselves and our power to make of the future what we most deeply desire to make of it.

twenty three

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND TEACHER TRAINING

I

One of the significant inferences which follow from the premises we have sought to lay down thus far is that the need and function of educational philosophy in the training of teachers are determined, not primarily by the formal content or method of the subject itself, but rather by the surrounding culture. For every culture, including our own, has a pattern of basic beliefs—political, economic, religious, moral, esthetic, scientific—which provides those who accept that culture with a sense of consistency and significance. This pattern, this rationale, when it expresses and encompasses more or less clearly and fundamentally the dominant attitudes, practices, and institutions of a given culture, is philosophy at its richest—philosophy, whether expressed in the essays of professional thinkers like Benedetto Croce or William James, in the poetry of Walt Whitman, in the novels of Thomas Mann, or in folklore, popular

taboos, and sanctions. Education, in its most universal meaning, may be regarded as the effort to translate this philosophy into practice by showing those members of a society who are considered most important to its welfare how to serve it most fruitfully. If philosophy articulates the beliefs of a culture, education helps to carry them out, and in doing so generates additional experience useful to that articulation.

In certain periods of history, philosophy's contribution does not, to be sure, seem especially important. Thus we implied in Chapter II, and have implied since, that when the dominant rationale appears fairly stable, fairly acceptable to a large number of bearers of the culture, their main concern is more with the task of education—a task in which our own culture has for some time been chiefly engaged. And it is just this kind of concern which largely accounts in America for the relative lack of systematic or thorough attention to philosophy in professional training of all types, including the training of teachers. Philosophy, insofar as it has seemed appropriate at all, could be left to almost any instructor, regardless of his own speciality, to be expounded whenever or wherever he chose during the teaching of his own courses in curriculum, administration, or other special fields. Or philosophy could even be quite deliberately rejected from the program as merely speculative and prescientific—a procedure often endorsed by the "scientists" of education with such telling effect as to exclude its systematic study from many teacher-training institutions altogether.

In the last two decades, however, one detects a gradually increasing opposition to such haphazard treatment or negligence. This opposition is due, neither to any new aggressiveness on the side of the philosophic partner, nor to a more generous spirit on the side of education, but again to that source from which both ultimately derive their own reason for being—the culture itself. There is no need to present further detailed evidence in support of the assertion that our governing beliefs are no longer unquestionably reliable, and that accordingly there is once more desperate need for reclarification.

Yet it is precisely the deep-seated maladjustments of con-

temporary culture which are responsible for the necessity of restoring an active philosophy-education partnership. Indeed, if education is honest, it often confesses that we are no longer certain as to what our governing beliefs are or should be. It begins to perceive that the "science" of education, for example, despite its often supercilious rejection of philosophy, has not in fact escaped from philosophy. Rather, by failing to give careful attention to patterns of belief, the measurement-of-fact movement has much too frequently been the ally of those beliefs about society, religion, and other areas which are implicit, presupposed, customary, and now less and less defensible.

In order, then, for education to serve our culture in time of accelerating change, the necessity for philosophy in the training of teachers again becomes paramount. Nor can this necessity be met by piecemeal and superficial treatment at the hands of just any instructor who happens to be assigned that responsibility. Every member of a college faculty can and should, to be sure, concern himself with philosophy; actually he cannot avoid doing so, any more than he can entirely avoid psychology regardless of his specialty. Much more needed today, however, are experts carefully trained in this exacting and enormous field; experts able to provide the same proficient and dependable consideration that we who touch upon psychology expect from specialists in that field; experts, therefore, who have received intensive preparation in university departments of philosophy as well as in education.

II

Turning now to form and subject-matter, we find that educational philosophy should perform three major services—all of them direct expressions of the crucial need which has just been outlined. The first: required study for all undergraduate and graduate students in teacher-training institutions. The second: opportunity for further study by those sufficiently concerned. The third: cooperative service between educational philosophy and other fields. We shall consider each in turn.

The required study of educational philosophy should come

in the first year of professional training, and should occupy as much time as goes into the history of education, the sociology of education, or the psychology of education. If the professional program begins after one or two years of general college training, there should be expected a prerequisite in general philosophy (as now usually in general psychology), in order that the philosophy of education may build upon it. The exact organization of the introductory course should, obviously, vary somewhat with the training, point of view, and other qualifications of different instructors. Several principles may, however, be suggested as in general appropriate to all such courses.

To begin with, educational philosophy should be interpreted in its cultural setting, rather than as an intellectual discipline studied for its own sake. For if, as we have contended, philosophy is defined as the conscious effort to achieve clarity in connection with those beliefs indigenous to a given culture, then the philosophy of education should concern itself extensively and intensively with two problems: one, how the conflicting and emerging elements of our culture are expressed through philosophic concepts and issues; and two, how beliefs now most appropriate should be concretely practiced through the medium of formal and informal education.

Further, while the instructor should at some point always indicate his own convictions, main emphasis in the first course should be upon fair consideration of each of the major types of educational philosophy at present most influential. Perhaps the commonest classification follows the types familiar in general philosophy: idealism, realism, and pragmatism. This classification fails, however, to meet our first criterion—the need for a clear cultural context—for both realists and idealists are almost equally influential within the single important movement in educational theory known as essentialism, a movement which is itself subject to cultural interpretation in that it tends to reinforce social conservatism. Pragmatism likewise has a cultural base, for it has been shown to be central not only to educational progressivism but to social liberalism as well. We are not here proposing any more satisfactory classification, however; we are

pleading only for a genuinely cross-sectional introduction, rather than the too familiar kind which considers almost entirely one philosophy, or at most two, and often ignores entirely those which are less orthodox and are yet perhaps all the more important.

The introductory course should also familiarize students with special philosophic problems helpful in achieving clarity of belief about issues of education and culture. Again, various treatments of these problems are possible. One is by means of the traditional but still thoroughly legitimate tools of ontology, epistemology, and axiology—that is, examination of the respective criteria of reality, knowledge, and value. Their influence, direct and indirect, upon educational and social practice should be made clear. Through abundant illustrations it should be possible for the average student to perceive, for example, how false standards of knowledge corrupt courses of study and events of everyday experience with a vast array of "truths" which are not truths at all, but plain falsehoods; and therefore to realize how urgent it is to develop reliable standards.

Lastly, another introductory course for graduate students who have taken no philosophy should follow the general principles already indicated, but on a somewhat more sophisticated plane. If they have already had such a course, graduate students should be required to elect at least one course in the second area where educational philosophy may be of service.

III

In the second area, a group of more intensive courses is needed, all of them elective except in special fields. Organization and content will depend, again, upon special qualifications of the staff. As far as possible, however, they should include the two following types.

1. A series of courses, presupposing an introductory course, should examine each of the major types of educational philosophy. Although even the first course should utilize original sources as well as secondhand interpretations, these advanced courses should do so more intensively, should be approached in

historic context, and should therefore be interpreted in the cultural milieu which produced them and upon which they have reacted. A course in perennialism, for example, should concentrate heavily on the writings of Aristotle and Thomas as they are pertinent to educational theory. Opportunity should, of course, be provided for the instructor to develop his own viewpoint in relation to each type of theory. It is also desirable for experiments to be set up in associated laboratory schools to illustrate how each type results in radically different types of educational practice.

2. Again following the first course there should be a group of units or courses in problems and techniques, to encourage the use of the most important philosophic tools. A course in critical thinking for teachers should put epistemology into operation, with the help of such related tools as semantics, logic, and propaganda analysis, and should give opportunity for critical application of these tools to educational materials such as textbooks, movies, and radio. Another course of this character should stress axiology, thus examining problems of value in educational fields such as the social studies, arts, and sciences. Here again there should be opportunity to consider critically how these problems permeate common materials of learning, and therefore the experiences of every culture.

IV

The third and last great area of service, that arising from educational philosophy's relations to other fields, is in accord with philosophy's historic role as the surveyer and interpreter par excellence of life as a whole.

Most important, perhaps, is the need for constant interdependence between the introductory course in this field and those in the history of education, educational sociology, and educational psychology. Ideally, all four fields should be planned and taught as an organic sequence of at least twelve semester hours over a year, with philosophy occupying a proportional time. The sequence should open with a period of perhaps three weeks in which major instructors from all four fields teach

together through panel discussions and similar techniques in order to preview the course and to highlight crucial issues within their cultural setting. Since philosophy is peculiarly concerned with the purposes and interconnectedness of all fields, it should serve during this period to integrate and direct the student's thinking. The sequence following would again vary somewhat in different situations, although a strong case might be made for the consecutive study of educational sociology, history, psychology, and philosophy in that order. Philosophy, at any rate, should ideally conclude the sequence: it should bring the four contributing fields into perspective, interpret them in terms of the several philosophic types, and show careful regard for the alternative avenues along which education may choose to travel in such a dynamic culture as ours.

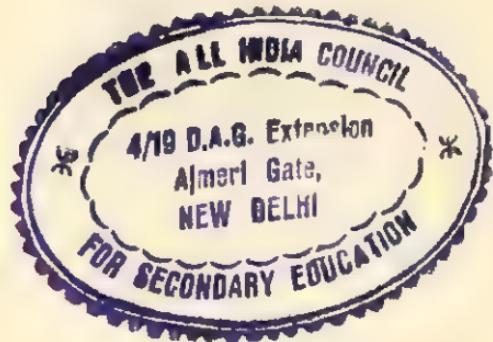
Another correlating function of educational philosophy should be as a kind of liaison between respective departments of the teacher-training institution. For, in addition to its own specialized interests, educational philosophy is, as it were, a *specialist in non-specialization*—that is, in the common principles of all areas of knowledge and experience. This being so, it should be able to contribute much to the development of "hub" curricula and common learnings; indeed, its own department might well serve as the proper center for developing projects and experiments in these new forms of educational integration. This same relational function should also permit assistance to every department in clarifying its own particular beliefs—not only in curriculum making or administration, for example, but also in the preparation and teaching of courses in the philosophy of special fields, such as industrial, physical, or art education.

The integrative service of educational philosophy extends still further. Its duty is to consider, however imperfect its performance, the unities prevailing not only *within* education, but *between* education and politics, science, religion—in fact between all areas which contribute to the wholeness of culture, and thus to the wholeness of local, national, and international communities.*

* See Chapter VI.

These obligations, while broadly stated, are directly pertinent to the question of what students should know about educational philosophy. That is, students should come to examine and clarify the beliefs underlying, not only their own special fields, not only education in its entirety, but education in harmony with all other great areas.

Thus a final responsibility of educational philosophy, in its third major capacity, is to provide students graduating from teacher-training institutions with a comprehensive outlook upon their profession. There should be, near the close of their senior year, one final, required course conducted by a group of instructors who plan and, if possible, present the chief issues and values of the entire field. This course, while not philosophic in the more technical sense of the introduction, should bring philosophy and education together upon one large canvas; it should review and synthesize the successive stages of the training which students have received; and it should set in perspective the large problems, great dangers, and significant promises confronting education in our time. In the degree that such a course of study fulfills this purpose, we shall be guaranteeing that no teacher will enter upon his career without both a deepened sense of urgency and of responsibility to his profession—and to his culture.



twenty four

TOWARD A DEMOCRATIC FAITH

I
It is time now to recapitulate and rephrase some of the fundamental beliefs which, implicitly or explicitly, have run through preceding pages. They began quite properly with philosophy, and they conclude with it.

Yet it is a fair question whether American democracy in general or education in particular can be said to possess anything like a philosophy sufficient for our period of world-wide revolution. We Americans have never worried greatly over the consistency, clarity, or sufficiency of our patterns of belief. We have not done so for the excellent reason that, until recently, we have seldom needed to do otherwise. We have been too wrapped up in the conviction of our own invincibility, too sure of our inevitable progress. The fact that we have hitherto emerged into uneasy interludes of prosperity and peace has actually encouraged our complacency.

No institution, moreover, reflects this complacency better than public education. The typical school structure and curriculum are weighted heavily with the past. To be sure, some institutions have recently shifted attention toward contemporary life. But even these too largely ignore the possibility that the future will be greatly different from either past or present.

No wonder, then, that education is still woefully lacking in concern for the profound reconstructions imminent in our mid-century. Thousands of teachers, of course, mention such questions in their classrooms; a few even devote topics or units specifically to them. But they are still peripheral in the overwhelming majority of schools. To propose that utmost consideration of the current and impending period of change and choice should become the pivot of the whole program of democratic education, elementary through the university, is to utter little less than an educational heresy.

Nevertheless, it is just this proposal which follows from the philosophy demanded by our time. Beliefs more or less satisfactory for our world of yesterday cannot possibly afford a secure foundation for the world of tomorrow. We have gradually come to perceive the tremendous effects of the growth of technology. We realize that the overwhelming phenomenon of collectivity, far from being incidental to the economic sphere, now becomes a major characteristic not only of the economic but of other spheres as well. We examine the democracies and wonder what it is that allows some of them to crumble almost overnight. We are puzzled and hurt by the discovery that our order is by no means the only kind able to captivate millions upon millions of human beings.

And so we ask where we can find strength so to vitalize our way of life that we shall with confidence test and prove its own superiority. This is the question to which all our institutions, and surely education, must now address themselves. Here is the central question of our crisis-culture.

The answer rests upon one indispensable conviction. This is that *democracy, more than any form of society devised thus far*

by man, is capable of providing greatest happiness for the largest number of people on the earth.

To state a conviction as directly as this is at once to raise a number of issues far-reaching in their implications. We shall indicate four such issues, and suggest the directions of solution which, once found, will reinvigorate our democratic faith.

II

The first of these is the extent to which our main conviction may be grounded in the *great traditions of democracy*. Especially of late, thoughtful patriots in search of fresh inspiration have been returning again and again to records of the past.

And they are justified. The whole of human history may, in fact, be interpreted as a conflict between those contracting forces which would refuse plain happiness to the masses of mankind and those expanding forces which would increase the chances of such happiness. Occasionally benevolent despots have been genuinely concerned with the universal welfare. But, for the most part, whatever success ordinary men achieved in winning larger stakes in the opportunities of nature and society resulted from exertion of their own powers in the face of those who, whenever possible, deprived them of these opportunities. Our own history moreover is essentially no different on this score: we only falsify if we talk glibly of the unity of American traditions and forget that our past, too, is scarred with struggles between those who would contract and those who would expand the privilege of sharing resources for a richer common life.

If we take sufficient care we may also note, however, that this privilege came through the centuries to be distinguished by certain attributes. As far back as ancient times it already meant fraternity—the precious experience of association, of sympathy and comradeship which attach so naturally to such association. It came eventually to mean liberty—an appreciation that, within the limits of fraternal obligation, men must work at tasks that give them outlets for their interests and abilities, must speak and write and worship as they choose, must join in determining all regulations over them. It still more slowly came to mean

equality—the recognition that, however great physical or intellectual distinctions, there can be no final barriers of color, social status, caste, or nationality. The institutional arrangements and historical events within which these attributes of happiness were gradually forged varied enormously; yet the more frequently and consciously the advocates of fraternity, equality, and liberty energized the conflict with advocates of hostile attributes, the more enduring their ideals became. It is no accident that, in the bright sunlight of the New World, they at last achieved a potency unsurpassed by any other epoch in the whole of history.

Our democratic heritage is therefore properly one reason why we can face the future with confidence and strength. Still we should err gravely were we to contend that it alone provides a dynamism sufficient for the crucial years ahead. The struggle which we mentioned is itself one indication that the humane purposes emerging from our past are by no means universally acceptable: those who would deny the general claim to happiness have never ceased to sabotage that claim even when, as so often still, they piously profess their loyalty. Moreover any heritage, divorced from the locale of its birth and growth, too easily becomes dead weight upon the changing order of a later day. No wonder that educational conservatives, abetted by their colleagues from economic ranks, are demanding a return to history courses which would stress dates, names, and events; they know that study of the past for its own sake and out of functional connection with problems of today is the kind of study guaranteed to be completely "safe."

III

The second issue arising from the proposition—that democracy in the long run assures the largest happiness—is whether we can find support in the *fundamental nature of the human being*.

This issue is not separate from the first. We may learn much about what men are like by studying their history. Yet a great deal can be said, too, for the argument that we shall not know what it is the multitude of folk expect from life until we better

understand their hungers, drives, their natural patterns of expression and development.

It is clear that anthropology, psychology, sociology, and other sciences of man are still too immature to support this argument with foolproof evidence. Yet it is clear also that, in recent years, the advances they have made are great—so great that it becomes possible to indicate in some detail what cross-sections of the people of our era require for a fairly rounded life. Sufficient food, comfortable shelter, protective clothing, sexual fulfillment, radiant health—these values properly come first. But men require, also, values of a far more subtle though equally essential kind: security, adventure, comradeship, privacy, sharing, recognition, creativity.

This is not to say that all human beings cherish satisfactions such as these with similar intensity or consciousness. Not only do societies differ in their emphases; within communities, even within single families, differences are far from trivial. But, given fluctuations of custom, habit, and activity induced by fluctuations in material and spiritual environments, these values serve to unite men and women of all colors, classes, creeds. Hence they are more than transitory incidents in the shifting social scene. Without being confused with qualities eternal or innate they give to human nature, as we must deal with it in the modern period of our evolution, a kind of empirically universal character.

Nor is this to say that democracy is the only order capable of meeting certain of man's needs. Even totalitarianism, briefly at least, may provide security of shelter, clothing, food. But while indispensable, these by no means constitute the sum of what to human nature is necessary to its own well-being. On the contrary, it may gain all of these yet gradually starve. Only when men also actively participate in the experience of producing such necessities, of feeling that in some modest way they are creating for themselves and others in their group, and above all of determining together all policies and programs—only then do they begin to tap the full powers which, when released, result in happiness.

And democracy is exactly this. It is personalities realizing interest, talent, power, value to the maximum. It is, therefore, both effect and cause: as human nature flowers in the soil of opportunity, democracy in turn is strengthened and enriched. Totalitarianism, on the other hand, thwarts fulfillment of too many of our basic wants. Thus, by the single superstition of dividing "lower" races from the "best," fascism denies millions any right to find expression for themselves. Being indifferent to science it scoffs at knowledge about man's cravings and potentialities. Communism, too, under the Soviet hierarchy violates man's normal want to participate fully in the conditions under which he lives and works; forces him into straightjackets of dictatorial rule; and so breeds, all too frequently, neuroses of frustration or hate.

Perhaps now we shall discover that in the light of human nature, even rule by the majority takes on a fresh significance. Far from serving merely as a mechanism of political decision it provides at least two sources of support for our central postulate. In the first place it suggests that a range of similar wants exists among the rank and file; values or want-satisfactions sought by the individual are often similar, in fact identified, with values of the group; and hence the very term *majority* connotes a social principle of commonality and unity. In the second place this principle suggests why the many ultimately choose to trust themselves, rather than the few. They are drawing, not alone from learning, precedent, or other sources of advice external to themselves, but from their own natures to decide what is most conducive to their happiness. Here moreover is the reconstructed democratic import of intelligence: it is human nature become collectively aware of and agreed upon what human nature wants, and of the steps necessary at a given time to satisfy its wants.

At the same time the argument from human nature, like the argument from history, has its own defects. One defect is to forget that human nature never functions wholly by itself but always within concrete social media. Still another defect follows from the imperfections of our scientific knowledge—imperfec-

tions which are surely due, in part, to the timidity with which the sciences of man so often approach investigations of the controversial type so desperately needed in our struggle between totalitarian and democratic ideologies.

IV

A third far-reaching issue now appears, however, if we ask whether such investigations in themselves can ever be enough. Are we not still compelled to cling devoutly to the final worth of the democratic creed? Need we, can we, ever show by means of history or of purely scientific knowledge that equality, fraternity, and liberty are valuable principles? Is not then *the equation of democracy and happiness beyond experimental proof?*

This kind of argument is common in our time. Confronted as we are by anti-democratic forces notorious for their fanatical appeal, no wonder that some defenders cry that nothing short of stronger counterforce both of arms *and* of beliefs can expect now to gain dominance over them. Such an argument is strengthened, not only by our still prevalent complacency, but by the kind of sophisticated viewpoint which repudiates any sort of conviction or commitment revealing too much fervor, too much certainty. Tentativeness, open-mindedness, are the virtues our most representative American philosophers frequently extol—virtues which are mirrored in the ideology of public education with its often superficial maxim of impartiality. Thus it is partly in reaction to these attitudes that some men turn back to medieval logic, indemonstrable self-evidence, or intuitive faith to satisfy their craving for an absolute ideal.

Now we should carefully observe that the species of self-evidence exemplified by contemporary "medievalists" may lure us into quicksands at least as treacherous as any its apologists detect in other points of view. Its fatal weakness is that *my* dogmatic axioms, which by the logic of my mind or heart are absolute to me, can never be weighed fairly against *your* axioms which by the logic of your mind and heart are absolute to you. Both of us are sure we're right: neither can prove to the other

that he's wrong so long as each clings to what is crystal-clear to him exclusively. This method compares well, in other words, with that of men who often hate democracy: since values in this view need no community of understanding or experience, therefore any *fuehrer* in a position of superior strength may "justify" enforcement of his own irrefutable self-evidence upon a weaker folk.

Nevertheless, there is one crucial way in which "self-evidence" of a sort does legitimately undergird our principal conviction. To begin with, values, unlike stars and frogs and other typical data of the scientist, are inextricably tied to the valuer himself; they cannot in this sense be dealt with entirely objectively. Persons must experience what values intrinsically mean —indeed, perhaps the best way for me to approach and appreciate your own values is to learn to put myself in your own place.

We do not, of course, say that science is devoid of usefulness. Rather, the more we learn about ourselves experimentally the more profound our reasons to believe that we cannot possibly realize our natures to the full without shared responsibility, free opportunities to be ourselves, or equal privilege and respect. But the point is that, since these values flow from springs of nature of which each person is himself a part, each person must testify to their vitality and then, with others who so testify, arrive finally at mutual agreement that here are indeed the values which they share. Precisely in this sense majority rule is, on a deeper plane, also the expression of normative consensus by the widest possible community as to what values, from mutual experience, are embraced by its constituents.

The inference which follows is that "self-evidence" of such a type is not to be confused at all with one's subjective, arbitrary certainty. It crystallizes slowly from the joint and informed certainty of men that they are now, as they have been throughout much of history, united by intense and poignant longings to gain their general happiness. By the same token it serves notice on the few, who for reasons of their own continue to deny the values of democracy, that here is the greatest single agency

of power in the hands of the majority—an agency so powerful that enemies of democracy, shrewdly fearing its revolutionary force, resort to every subterfuge and cruelty to keep it drugged and chained.

We may properly conclude, therefore, that "self-evidence" as a *public* instrument of majority control is helpful to the conviction we are trying to clarify. But this is still not to say that, even added to the other arguments, it terminates our quest. We have already pointed out its dangers as a *private* instrument. We have not observed how futile it may be unless, along with the tradition of the forces of expansion and man's own common nature, it is supplemented by careful blueprints of social institutions.

V

Thus we come to the fourth and final issue involved in our delineation of the democratic faith. Is it possible, desirable, or both, to design these *blueprints for the needed world-wide culture?* Some deny the possibility: they insist that no one can anticipate ahead, that serious contingencies are sure to intervene. Others hold anticipation to be undesirable; they prefer to dwell upon intuitive self-evidence, or the glories of the past. Or they may insist that enthusiastic advocacy of specific goals is all too likely to be dogmatic and inflexible.

It is, however, also true that much attention is increasingly being given to the feasibility of comprehensive plans. We are asking why, if they are workable for families, businesses, all kinds of partial groups, plans cannot also function for nations or even for international affairs. We are aware that economic planning has already embraced many aspects of our national life. And we know much more than some readily admit about the democratically planned society we can organize if we but have the will.

We know, for instance, that a decentralized yet strongly socialized economy can be amazingly successful: there is the TVA. We know that government ownership of a national institution can operate efficiently: our postal system is a living proof. We know what the average citizen needs for decent shelter, cloth-

ing, nourishment, and health: experts in nutrition, housing, medicine, already fairly well agree on what the proper standards are. We know that this country (and there is strong reason to suppose other countries too) *could* provide for these needs as well as full employment, decent education, security against old age: resources and technology are capable of almost limitless development. We even know a great deal about effective operation of a federal union of the kind which should soon be organized between nations of the world: we have had more than a century of American experience with a union not only of vast size but of wide cultural and economic differences.

At the same time, to demand clearcut institutional objectives is not equivalent to demanding goals so static as to permit no later change. Means influence, of course, the nature of our ends; as we move ahead we may be sure our ends will become modified. But sometimes we forget that ends also influence the nature of our means; the more definite we are as to what we wish to win, the less necessary will be diluting compromise and the more probable our devising of effective strategies. *Ends without means are empty, but means without ends are blind.*

While our problem, then, is not so much to avoid sharp social purposes as to make them sharp enough, there is a weakness here also which we cannot overlook. To design a structure for political and economic life, yet to ignore, for example, the spectrum of man's natural energies which much exert themselves if life is to be good, is only to contaminate our plans with serious defects, and so to invite eventual collapse.

VI

Two general conclusions seem to follow from our analysis of the conviction that democratic happiness is worth fighting to achieve.

This conviction, in the first place, is clearly not so much the product of a single principle as it is a synthesis. Thus the great traditions of democracy deepen in significance and strength through expanding scientific knowledge of essential wants—wants which, with the help both of history and of human na-

ture, seem more and more publicly "self-evident" to that majority which finds itself inescapably engaged in their pursuit.

But our conviction needs still another element: graphic outlines of the economic, political, and cultural democracy which nearly all of us could cooperate to build. Without promise of abundance, enlightenment, equality of opportunity; without the definite objective of an international order operated by and for humanity itself—without, in brief, commitment to a people's world, we shall ultimately go down to defeat in peace even though meanwhile victorious in war.

Here then, in the second place, we must count heavily upon the kind of education which our other pages advocate. With its help our citizens could be taught afresh the venerable lessons of past struggles to implement the values of democracy. They could come to understand their own natures and how richly, given opportunity, these might be expressed. They could learn that what most of them mutually want becomes to *them*, at any rate, a "self-evident" criterion of consensus, unity, and strength. They could share, finally, in fashioning the design of a new free world where ideal purposes become clothed in the realities of earth, culture, and technology.

To learn these lessons would mean, in other words, that our public schools at last subscribed to a philosophy of education at once appropriate to our present age and directed toward the *future* of democracy.



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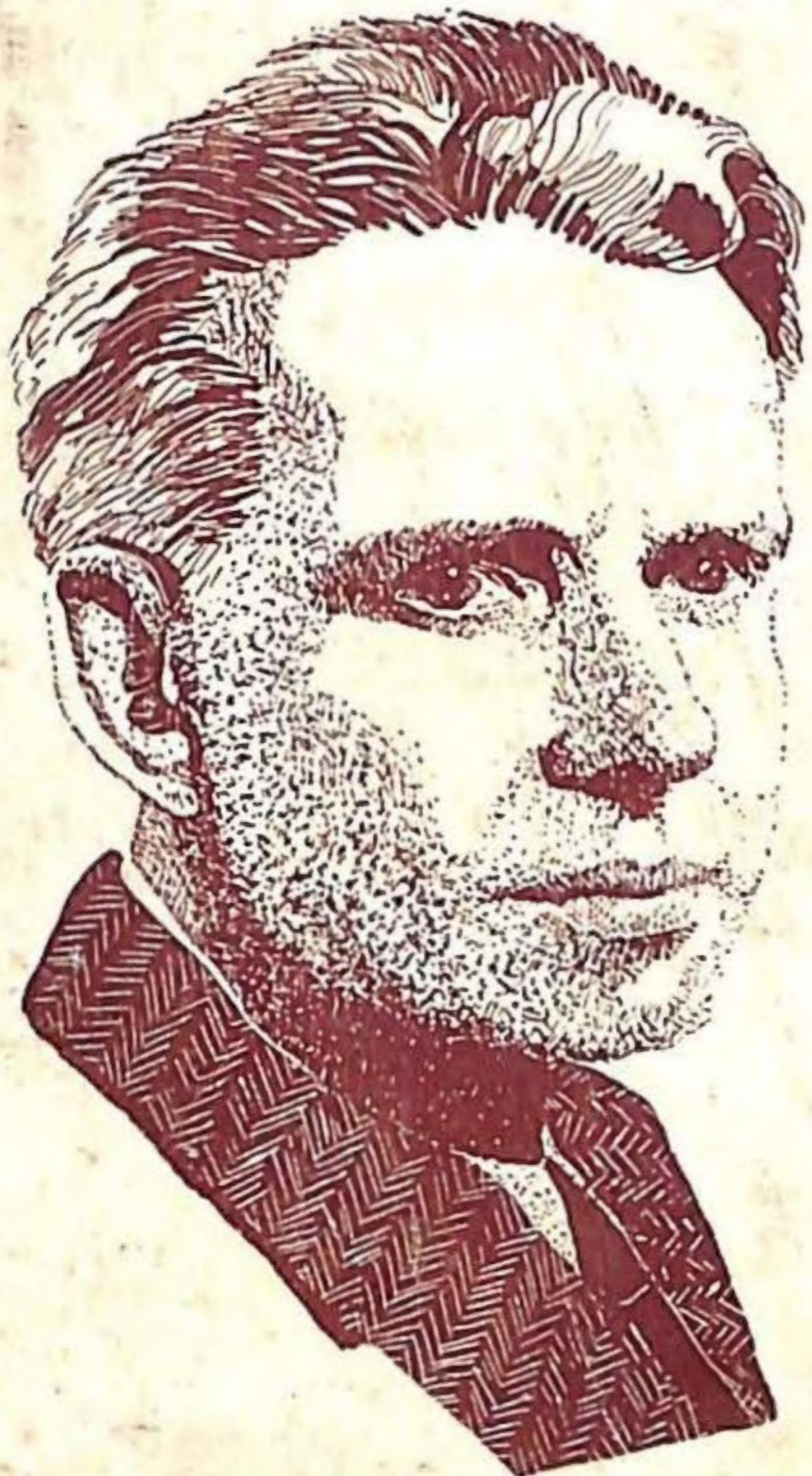
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